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"*Rick Blom's Tongue-in-Cheek Dictionary of Birding Terms*"

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Cover: Eirik A. T. "Rick" Blom. Photographed by Bill Thompson, III (former Editor and Co-Publisher, *Bird Watcher's Digest*) at Bill's farm in Whipple, Ohio, circa 1999–2000.

Maryland Birdlife 68(2):1–2

EDITOR'S NOTE

Eirik Adam Tecumseh "Rick" Blom was my best birding friend. Besides being an accomplished birder, he was a prolific reader and writer. Rick's birding accomplishments were many: Project Coordinator for the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*, Co-Chief Consultant for the *National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America* (1st and 2nd Editions), Editor of *Birding*, Mid-Atlantic Region Co-Editor for *American Birds*, Contributing Editor for *Bird Watcher's Digest* (Blom on Birds, Quick Takes, Species Profile, Book Notes), Researcher and Writer for *The BWD Skimmer* and *Backyard Bird News*, and Adjunct Faculty at The Johns Hopkins University (continuing education birdwatching courses).

Maryland Ornithological Society member Sue Ricciardi reminded me that before Rick passed away in 2002, he had been working on a tongue-in-cheek dictionary of birding terms. Sue had a draft paper copy in her possession. Since a paper copy would not be the easiest format with which to work, I began investigating whether any digital drafts existed. Fortuitously, I tracked down a digital copy that Rick had transferred to his lifelong friend Steve Sapperstein. (Note: A few of the dictionary terms were previously published in *Bird Watcher's Digest*.)

Except for minor grammatical edits, Rick's "dictionary-in-progress" is reproduced here as it was written. Demonstrating Rick's wry sense of humor, the entries are cynical, irreverent, sarcastic, opinionated, and sometimes risqué and politically incorrect. I have arbitrarily rated the dictionary PG-13. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. The definitions stated in the tongue-in-cheek dictionary do not necessarily reflect the views of the officers or members of the Maryland Ornithological Society. With these reader caveats in mind, please accept Rick's work-in-progress as a revisit to an earlier era.

I thank Douglas E. Gill and my wife Marcia R. Watson for their helpful input.

Photos of Rick follow on the succeeding page.

Eugene J. Scarpulla
Editor

[*Note: The summary reports for the 2018–2019 Christmas Bird Counts, the 2019 Mid-winter Bird Counts, and the 2019 Fort Smallwood Park spring raptor migration that would normally be published in the fall issue of* Maryland Birdlife*, will instead be published in the spring 2020 issue.*]

Rick at 19 months, December 1948.

Rick as a bearded young man.

Rick at a wedding, age 33.

Rick laughing with family.

Rick and daughter Jessie, 1984.

Rick at Jessie's high school graduation, June 2000.

Thanks are extended to Rick's daughter Jessie Reeder, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor, Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric, Binghamton University, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York) for providing the photographs.

Maryland Birdlife 68(2):3–96

Tongue-in-Cheek Dictionary of Birding Terms

Eirik A. T. Blom†
†*Deceased*

[*Words within each definition that are in CAPITAL LETTERS are cross-referenced elsewhere in the dictionary. "Ed.:..." are annotated editorial updates by Eugene J. Scarpulla.*]

300 CLUB: British version of the 600 CLUB.

600 CLUB: Formerly exclusive club comprising the people who claimed to have seen 600 species in NORTH AMERICA.

700 CLUB: Organization formed by founders of 600 CLUB once it became overrun with riffraff.

800 CLUB: Organization currently in the planning stage.

900 CLUB: Inevitable.

ABANDONMENT: Anthropomorphic term, suggesting disapproval, describing a bird's decision to quit a particular nesting attempt because of cowbird parasitism, lack of food resources, human harassment, or other factors we are not aware of.

ABDOMEN: Scientific term for belly, one of the few technical anatomical terms most BIRDWATCHERS are comfortable with.

ABERRANT: Any bird that looks or acts differently than we think it ought to. Humans, driven to provide precise and narrow definitions, probably see more aberrancy than birds do.

ABUNDANT: Any bird you can reliably show to someone else. See COMMON.

ACCESS FUND: Rock climbing environmental group, one of whose goals is to ensure that access to favored sites is not limited by environmental considerations. See SURFRIDER.

ACCIDENTAL: Describes a bird that shows up where we do not expect it to. See CASUAL.

ACCIPITER: The genus of bird-hunting, woodland hawks that includes Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and NORTHERN GOSHAWK. Identification is extremely difficult because the species are similar and because they are usually seen for two seconds, disappearing through the trees. Hawk aficionados argue that as many as half of all accipiter identifications, excepting their own of course, are in error.

ACOUSTIC BROADCAST: Euphemism for using a TAPE RECORDER, necessitated by the low esteem into which the technique has fallen. "I used acoustic broadcast to measure the territorial responsiveness of Prairie Warblers..." means "I got the loudest recorder I could find and bombed those puppies with playbacks to see what they would do...," a perfectly reasonable but socially unacceptable bit of research.

ADAPTATION: Any evolved characteristic that improves an organism's prospects of survival and reproduction. Occasionally misused to refer to temporary adjustments in behavior or range imposed by HABITAT MODIFICATION.

ADDLED: Pre-scrambled; refers to eggs that are infertile or have been shaken.

ADULT: In birds, applies to PLUMAGE, not behavior. See IMMATURE.

ADVENTITIOUS: Science talk for stained. The red color on some Sandhill Cranes comes from iron oxide in the water they forage in and is adventitious.

ADYC (ANOTHER DAMNED YELLOW COMPOSITE): Technical identification used by many BIRDWATCHERS who are BOTANIZING, for members of the Compositae family of wildflowers, which include a bewildering number of yellow flowers with multiple petals. [*Ed.: Family now Asteraceae.*]

AERIE: Nest, typically on a cliff, too high above the ground to see into or rob easily. Archaic; survives only in crossword puzzles and in the jargon of FALCONERS.

A FEW HUNDRED YARDS: Any distance between ten feet and ten miles when used by another BIRDWATCHER to describe how much farther down the trail a bird you want to see is.

AGEING: The assignment of an age category (e.g., IMMATURE, first-winter, JUVENILE, etc.) to a bird seen in the field. The confidence of many practitioners is bolstered by ignorance of MOLT, range of variation, and overreliance on the superficial treatment provided in FIELD GUIDES. See SEXING.

AGONISTIC BEHAVIOR: Euphemism for birds' insistence on using violence rather than diplomacy to resolve disputes.

AGRIBUSINESS: FARMING run capitalistically amok, the implementation of the old Southern tenant farming system on a grand scale. Although more efficient and no more damaging to the environment than the equivalent acreage in smaller farms, hypocritically decried by PRESERVATIONISTS as destructive. Most of the critics suffer from an untreatable strain of nostalgia.

AGRICULTURE: FARMING on a still small enough scale to be largely viewed as positive. See AGRIBUSINESS.

AHY: After Hatching Year. BIRD BANDERS use a completely different system for AGEING birds. The codes are nearly meaningless to non-banders, but unfortunately slip into casual conversation and some writing. If one is feeling generous, one assumes such lapses are inadvertent.

ALBERTA CLIPPER THEORY: Describes the result of birds being moved south and east by a powerful COLD FRONT originating in the Arctic and passing over the Canadian Prairie Provinces. Extended in an effort to explain the appearance of Alaskan and even Asian, species in the East in the hope that they will not be treated as ESCAPES or SHIP-ASSISTED and can thus be counted. See BIRDS HAVE WINGS AND SOMETIMES USE THEM.

ALBINISM: The appearance of white feathers in place of normally colored ones. Disco outfit, worn year-round.

ALCID: 1) Small SEABIRDS that purportedly breed on remote islands only scientists are allowed to visit. 2) Any DUCK seen from shore under difficult conditions.

ALERT!: HEADER on e-mail messages that means a locally rare bird has been found, equivalent to the banner headlines newspapers use to announce the outbreak of war. Uninformative and enticing, requiring that the message be

opened and read, even though it may refer to a bird common in your backyard that has been spotted on the other side of the continent.

ALIEN: Catchall term for introduced and escaped organisms or any that appear anywhere we do not consider their proper range.

ALLEE EFFECT: What happens when an animal's POPULATION drops to the point where normal reproductive behavior is disrupted, so that even though there are a fair number of individuals left, extinction is inevitable. It is assumed that this accounts for the final demise of the PASSENGER PIGEON.

ALLOPATRIC: The theory that two groups of birds, living on opposite sides of the country and never coming into contact, are the same species because EXPERTS have not figured out how to tell them apart in the field. See SYMPATRIC.

ALLOPREENING: Petting, sometimes foreplay. The act of one bird PREENING and cleaning the feathers of another, usually its mate.

ALPHA CODES: The technical and correct name for what most BIRDWATCHERS call banders codes. Comes from the same root as alphabet, meaning letters. See ALPHA-NUMERIC CODES.

ALPHA-NUMERIC CODES: A combination of letters and numbers put on neck collars and wing tags, large enough to be read through a TELESCOPE. Many BIRDWATCHERS read the codes but lose the slip of paper they were written on or lack the energy to report them.

ALTITUDINAL MIGRATION: Movement from higher to lower elevation in the FALL and back again in the SPRING. BIRDWATCHERS have a narrow view of MIGRATION and usually call such movements IRRUPTIONS or wanderings.

ALTRICIAL: Refers to baby birds that are born helpless and need constant tending by the parent. See PRECOCIAL.

ALTRUISM: Highly controversial claim that some animals occasionally behave in a manner that serves another individual's self-interest but not their own. Proponents are that remnant of the scientific community that still believes in the perfectibility of man.

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION (ABA): A national organization of BIRDERS as opposed to BIRDWATCHERS, the founders take credit for creating the distinction. Considered by many non-members to be elitist and snobbish because of their obsessive insistence that the distinction is crucial. Created to service the needs of LISTERS, success has made it schizophrenic, angering many of its oldest members.

AMERICAN EGRET: See COMMON EGRET.

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION (AOU): The Trilateral Commission of BIRDING. The AOU is the official referee organization for all matters of TAXONOMY in North American birds. Virtually all organizations, publishers, and individuals follow their decisions, usually kicking and screaming. [*Ed.: Now American Ornithological Society (AOS).*]

AMERICAN ROBIN: A member of the thrush family saddled with the name robin by early settlers because it reminded them of the familiar garden bird they had left behind. Even a casual comparison of the two reveals, historical myth about determined and intrepid travelers notwithstanding, how much home must have been on their minds.

ANHINGA: A primarily southern species. See CORMORANT.

ANI: 1. The answer to the crossword puzzle clue, "Member of the cuckoo family," which it marginally is. 2. A weak and almost always unsuccessful addition to the list of names BIRDWATCHERS try to make puns out of. See BOOBY.

ANIMAL CONTROL: Agency responsible for removing PEST SPECIES. Also called GOPHER CHOKERS by those unimpressed by the job.

ANIMAL RIGHTS: Political movement generally endorsed by BIRDWATCHERS, noting the exceptions of BROOD PARASITES, INTRODUCED SPECIES, some snakes, feeder-hunting hawks, PEST SPECIES, and any other animal that offends the sensibilities or interferes with the pleasure of BIRDWATCHING. See PETA.

ANNOTATED CHECKLIST: A list of the birds of a defined area, compiled by whomever has the time and inclination. The annotation consists of comments on rare birds the author did not see and wishes to discredit, or did see and wishes to give credence to, as well as indications of seasonal abundance that often say as much about the experience, knowledge, and bias of the compiler as about the status of the birds.

ANTERIOR: Science for the front end of a bird. See POSTERIOR.

ANTING: What birds do instead of spraying themselves with Deep Woods Off and other repellents.

APPEARANCE DISCRIMINATION: Choosing a potential mate based on attractiveness. An indication of evolutionary sophistication in birds but a socially indictable offense in humans, who do it anyway but have learned to be discreet.

ARBOREAL: Tree-living. A species is arboreal only when it spends virtually its entire life in trees. Grassland birds, MARSH dwellers, and coastal species are not arboreal, even if you regularly see them sitting in a tree.

ARCHAEOPTERYX: The Shroud of Turin of ornithology.

ARCTIC REDPOLL: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Hoary Redpoll. The Old World name is based on range, the NEW WORLD name on appearance. See REDPOLL, DIVER.

ARMCHAIR SPECIES: BIRDER term for the increasing number of "species" distinguished primarily by range and genetics. The lack of distinguishing FIELD MARKS means the birds provide little emotional zip, even to LISTERS, but the TREND is escalating and a new, better term is inevitable. Sometimes called PARASPECIES or PSEUDOSPECIES, neither of which is memorable.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS: The primary bogeyman of the early environmental movement, a DAM-building, RIVER-channelizing, habitat-destroying agency; now viewed with favor as it has gotten into the DREDGE SPOIL IMPOUNDMENT building, WETLAND-restoration, development-permit denying business.

ARRIVAL DATE: The first date in SPRING or FALL in which a MIGRANT is seen in a given area, usually a state or province. The perceived arrival date for any species is largely dependent on how many people are watching and how small a percentage of the watchers report their observations. See DEPARTURE DATE.

ASS (ACCIPITER SUPPRESSION SOCIETY): Organization for those people who believe that bird-hunting hawks represent the evil side of Nature and should

be systematically destroyed. Membership increases whenever one of the faint-of-heart witnesses Nature-as-it-is, an intolerable assault on the view of Nature-as-it-should-be-if-it-were-like-me.

ASSORTIVE MATING: The choice of a partner as influenced by age, size, color, or other factors, just as in humans.

ASTROTURF GROUP: Fox in the henhouse. Pro-business, anti-environmental group, often with a deliberately misleading name. See GREENSCAMMING.

ASY: After Second Year. Banding code. See AHY.

ATTENUATED: Tony term for long. BIRDERS are fond of referring to some species, such as Lesser Black-backed Gull in relation to Herring Gull, as attenuated, meaning that on a sitting bird the wings extend farther beyond the tail.

ATTU: Westernmost island in the Aleutian chain, the Rodeo Drive of North American BIRDING. People spend tens of thousands of dollars to go there so they can boast of having seen a bird in NORTH AMERICA that is ABUNDANT in Japan, where it can be viewed in comfort for one-third the cost.

AUDITORY HALLUCINATION: Highly technical term useful when you have been caught identifying a barking dog as a distant owl.

AUDUBON, JOHN JAMES: The Godhead of North American ornithology, the only man in history to kill more birds than Frank Perdue.

AURICULAR: Technical term for EAR PATCH.

AVALON: Coastal New Jersey town, site of the best and most widely known sea watch in NORTH AMERICA, recording nearly 1,000,000 birds a year.

AVERAGE BIRDER: Definition pronoun dependent. "He/she is an average birder" means "Not quite as good as I am." "I am an average birder" means "Modesty prevents me from saying it, but..."

AVIAN: Related to birds. Thus, "avian mating systems" means "the mating systems of birds." The former is marginally shorter and, you have to concede, sounds more impressive.

AVIAN BIOLOGIST: Subtly distinct subspecies of ORNITHOLOGIST, suggesting the practitioner is above such passé pursuits as museum work.

AVIAN TREMENS: BIRDER name for the painful trembling in the forearm muscles resulting from holding BINOCULARS up to the eyes for an extended time, as when following a flying bird.

AVIARY: Very large, fancy-sounding bird cage. Most, like the smaller versions, serve no higher purpose than the confinement and display of birds for the amusement or financial benefit of humans.

AVICIDE: Euphemism for a poison that is targeted specifically at birds and thus kills only a politically acceptable number of other organisms.

AVIFAUNA: Graduate school word for "Birds of..."

AVIPHILE: Another tortured alternative to BIRDWATCHER or BIRDOLOGIST.

AVOCET: For most BIRDWATCHERS, the most beloved SHOREBIRD because it is a GOOD BIRD in many areas and because misidentification is almost impossible.

AVON SKIN SO SOFT: Product mistakenly touted as an INSECT REPELLENT. It is not, and even the manufacturer is not foolish enough to make the claim. It

does have an advantage over other folk medicines in that one at least acquires soft skin for our tiny friends to munch on.

AXILLARS: Technical term for a bird's armpit, used because birds don't have arms and "wingpit" makes people giggle.

B = BIGGER/BERGMANN: Mnemonic device used to help remember one of the fundamental biological concepts, Bergmann's Rule, which says that on average, individuals of a species are larger the farther away from the Equator they breed. Does not mean, as many people think, that all northern birds are larger than more southern ones. See G = GAUDY/GLOGER.

BABBLER: A family of birds, not someone who has just discovered a RARITY.

BACHMAN'S WARBLER: Probably EXTINCT species. See ESKIMO CURLEW.

BACKCROSS: Offspring resulting when a HYBRID mates with either species, further evidence of ingratitude on the part of birds accorded species status.

BACKPACKER'S SYNDROME: See THORACIC-OUTLET SYNDROME.

BACKYARD BIRDER: Derogatory term used by EXPERTS for BIRDERS who are not willing to drive 200 miles on a hot day to stand around a sewage treatment plant hoping for a glimpse of a bird already seen and photographed by 300 people. See FEEDER WATCHER.

BACKYARD BIRD HABITAT: What everyone who plants a SHRUB or puts up a feeder proudly claims to have created. The illogical extension of the concept of habitat to well beyond the breaking point.

BALD EAGLE: Neither bald nor a true eagle, making it a perfect national symbol. Poster child for the ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, to which its recovery is unrelated.

BALDPATE: American Wigeon. See HUNTER'S NAMES.

BANANAS AS MOSQUITO REPELLENT: MOSQUITOES are such a universal torment for BIRDWATCHERS that many folk medicines have been tried as an alternative to chemicals. It is not surprising that the theory exists that eating bananas changes the chemical composition of the body in such a way as to make one unattractive to mosquitoes, but its persistence in the face of failure is a tribute to how important this issue is. See INSECT REPELLENT.

BANK SWALLOW: See SAND MARTIN.

BANTAM: A specific type of chicken, and by extension, small and perhaps feisty, but its application to any other birds, while regrettably not rare, is in error.

BARN OWL: Species in which a minuscule percentage of the POPULATION nests in barns, but so named to reinforce a phony symbiotic relationship with man. See HOUSE WREN and BARN SWALLOW.

BARN SWALLOW: See BARN OWL. To retain the implied relationship in the modern era the name should be changed to Dam Swallow, Highway Underpass Swallow, or Patio Deck Swallow.

BARTRAMIAN SANDPIPER: Previous name for Upland Sandpiper, the use now rare among BIRDERS.

BARWIT: Brit BIRDER shorthand for Bar-tailed Godwit, a species rare in NORTH AMERICA, where it is sometimes called, unimaginatively, Bar-tail.

BASKETBIRD: FOLK NAME for either Baltimore or Orchard Oriole because of the shape of the nest.

BATESIAN MIMICRY: Describes the situation in which some birds, otherwise delectable, assume a PLUMAGE that mimics poisonous or otherwise unappetizing species. More or less like a stockbroker buying a Harley and wearing leather and temporary tattoos, but much more effective and not risible.

BAYPOLL: A FALL WARBLER, either a Bay-breasted or a Blackpoll. The two, superficially similar, are thought by many observers to be nearly impossible to separate at that time of year because numerous authors have neglected to learn or present the distinctions. Another example of the CONFUSING FALL WARBLERS syndrome.

BBC (BABY BIRD CALLS): BIRDER lingo for the generic, unidentifiable noises that baby birds make. A frequently heard sound in the SUMMER, but except in rare cases, it is impossible to tell what species is involved unless the adult is seen.

BEAK: Synonym for BILL but usually restricted to DOMESTIC FOWL, non-ornithological uses, and literary efforts.

BEARDED TIT: European species that inspires tortured, juvenile humor in American BIRDWATCHERS. See TIT.

BEAU GESTE HYPOTHESIS: The theory that some species, like NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD, have a large vocal repertoire that includes the songs of other species as a way of discouraging other birds from nesting within its TERRITORY. Similar to the man in a singles bar who loudly claims to be a rich, semi-retired, business-owning, globe-trotting, war hero, politically-connected, poetry-writing, stud. It the case of birds, however, it appears to work.

BEEF BITTERN: BIRDER lingo for Cattle Egret.

BEEHIVE: Pelagic BIRDER term for a swarm of SEABIRDS feeding over a school of fish because of the frenzied diving, buzzing, turning, activity.

BEE HUMMINGBIRD: Answer to the question, "What is the world's smallest bird?" See WORLD'S LARGEST BIRD.

BEE MARTIN: Old name for Eastern Kingbird, because of its fondness for bees.

BEGINNING BIRDER: One who knows less than you do. See INTERMEDIATE BIRDER.

BEHAVIORAL CLUE: The theory that because a bird stops at 7–11 instead of Dunkin' Donuts for its morning coffee, we can tell which kind of *EMPIDONAX* FLYCATCHER it is.

BEVY: Collective noun for quail. A bunch of them. See COVEY.

BEWICK'S SWAN: See WHISTLING SWAN.

BIG BIRD: Many CASUAL BIRDWATCHERS with children find themselves wondering on what bird this character is based. It is more or less a chicken.

BIG DAY: A twenty-four-hour bout of group insanity in which a team of three to six normally sensible people try to see as many birds as possible within a defined area. There is no known benefit or purpose other than to attempt to break existing Big Day records. For obvious reasons, no one believes the results of single observer Big Days.

BIG GREEN MACHINE: What some members and employees of the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, too easily seduced by the fleeting pleasure of self-congratulation, and hoping that saying it will make it true, call their organization.

BIG SIT: The Doo-Dah Parade of BIG DAYS, originally conceived as a putdown or one-off that consists of COUNTING all the birds one can see from a single spot in a day. Inevitably it became serious, with teams, rules, and a national competition, eliminating its original appeal for many people.

BIG WHITE FLUFFIES: The delight of HAWKWATCHERS, large white clouds that make spotting hawks immeasurably easier. Often begin to appear in mid-morning, formed by rising hot air, which also signals the beginning of movement for many hawks.

BIG YEAR: An effort to see as many birds as possible in a year in a defined area. Self-motivational ploy used by people who have run out of new birds close to home and cannot afford to go to ATTU.

BILL: See BEAK.

BILLBOARD: Environmentally irrelevant but attacked with disproportionate fervor because it blocks the view of scenic, if fatally degraded, landscapes.

BILLING: Lipless kissing.

BINOCULARS: The obligatory, defining piece of equipment that makes it possible to misidentify birds too far away or too small to be seen with the naked eye. If you don't own them, you are not a BIRDER, no matter how much time you spend watching. Predictably, men tend to buy large, high-powered, expensive binoculars; women smaller, less expensive, more manageable ones. See TELESCOPE.

BIODEGRADABLE: Able to be reabsorbed into the environment without harm. Only a minuscule percentage of manufactured products are truly biodegradable and an even smaller percentage of those that claim to be are. See GREEN-COLLAR FRAUD.

BIODIVERSITY: The white-hot environmental buzzword of the 1990s. A legitimate concept that rose to prominence when it became clear that there was more money available for saving ECOSYSTEMS than for saving individual species. Its application has become so automatic that it has lost all meaning.

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL: The control of PEST SPECIES by natural means, usually by introducing a predator or a disease. Although there are often unintended and expensive consequences, the popularity of the technique does not suffer because humans have a moral hierarchy related to killing other organisms.

BIOLOGICAL PARENT: A borrowing from human biology made necessary by the recent discovery of the flexibility of many AVIAN MATING systems.

BIOLOGICAL SPECIES CONCEPT: The outdated notion that a bird is a species if it looks different from other birds and does not breed with birds it does not look like. See PHYLOGENETIC SPECIES CONCEPT.

BIOPHILIA: Recently coined term that describes an obsessive, sometimes pathological need to be close to nature, especially animals. Increasingly common, victims are mostly self-medicated, either by owning disturbing numbers of cats, ECO-TOURING to the extent that budget and time allow, or by going into WILDLIFE rehabilitation.

BIOTELEMETRY: Less common version of RADIO TELEMETRY.

BINS: British slang for BINOCULARS, used by Americans who have been to Britain and want you to know it, or who want to leave the impression they regularly hobnob with British BIRDERS.

BIOTA: Scientific term for all living things within a defined area, excluding humans.

BIPARENTAL CARE: Science for "both parents help raise the young."

BIRDATHON: Activity in which three or four BIRDERS raise money for some worthy cause by strong-arming individuals and businesses into pledging money for every species seen in a twenty-four-hour period. There is no proof that in some cases they sit in a diner all afternoon making a list of the birds they might have seen if they had gone BIRDING.

BIRD BANDER: Someone who, armed only with a net and a ruler, can write a creditable three-volume LIFE HISTORY of any individual bird, but who, armed with a $1,000 worth of BINOCULARS, cannot tell a BALD EAGLE from a chickadee.

BIRD BANDING: Government-subsidized welfare program in which birds with low self-esteem are provided with costume jewelry and in which Japanese housewives with no formal education are paid to tie knots.

BIRD CLUB PRESIDENT: The person who made the miscalculation of using the facilities when the vote was taken.

BIRD CLUB VICE-PRESIDENT: Acquaintance, but not necessarily friend of, the BIRD CLUB PRESIDENT, who was short-sighted enough not to attend the meeting.

BIRDER: Recently invented term by those who bridle under the passive, little-old-lady-in-tennis-shoes image they associate with BIRDWATCHER.

BIRD FANCIER: Not related to BIRDWATCHER, but someone who keeps and breeds birds. Fancies birds as long as they are in cages.

BIRD FEEDER: Derogatory term used by FEEDER WATCHERS to describe people who feed birds without making any effort to determine which kinds they are. See NUT.

BIRDFINDING GUIDE: Detailed directions to prime BIRDING locations that have subsequently been converted to trailer parks.

BIRD FREAK: Popular non-BIRDWATCHER name for those that do. Although usually delivered with a disarming smile, it almost always is intended to be as mean-spirited as it sounds.

BIRDING: Recently invented term by those who do not feel BIRDWATCHING adequately conveys the drama, excitement, importance, and sporting aspects of their activities.

BIRDING BLITZ: 1) A RUN-AND-GUN, all-out, BIRDING assault on an area by a group or team, scooping up known rarities, STAKEOUTS, and as many species as possible. 2) Occasional synonym for BIRDATHON.

BIRDING WITH BABIES: No more difficult than what most Olympic gymnasts do on the balance beam. Thoughtful BIRDWATCHERS never do it in the company of others.

BIRD LOVER: Someone who feels an overpowering affection for birds without knowing anything about them, much despised by all forms of BIRDWATCHERS, many of whom are no better informed.

BIRDO: Australian slang for someone who watches birds, adopted by those in Europe and NORTH AMERICA who wish to avoid the controversy over BIRDER and BIRDWATCHER.

BIRD OF PREY: Term for a bird, almost always a hawk or owl, that typically hunts the same animals that humans do. Other birds, such as SWALLOWS and FLYCATCHERS, also hunt, but we do not call them birds of prey because we do not value, and in fact actively avoid, their prey.

BIRDOLOGIST: Embarrassingly contrived effort at an alternative to BIRDWATCHER, sometimes found in popular writing. Is usually intended to suggest that the designee is a little more than passing strange.

BIRD RECORDINGS: Marketing ploy in which audio outtakes from various PBS shows are sold as bird songs.

BIRDS AND BLOOMS: Magazine for gardeners who like birds but are not really BIRDWATCHERS and are thus unaware of or untroubled by occasional error, misinformation, or superficial treatment because the pictures are pretty.

BIRDS HAVE WINGS AND SOMETIMES USE THEM: Rejoinder offered in response to the convoluted scenarios created to explain why a bird has shown up 100s or 1000s of miles from where we expect it. Such explanations usually begin, "A series of low pressure systems passed through the area in the month preceding..." and get sillier from there. The originator was an early ORNITHOLOGIST explaining why every bird in NORTH AMERICA would eventually be found in California.

BIRDS OF THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC: Massive multi-volume publication on the birds of Europe, popular with serious North American BIRDERS because it provides the most complete, exhausting PLUMAGE descriptions and because many of the birds in the first three volumes are found on both continents. Commonly shorthanded to CRAMP or *BWP*. [*Ed.: Full title:* Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa: The Birds of the Western Palearctic.]

BIRDS PER PARTY HOUR: Statistical trick used to gloss over the wildly inconsistent collection of data on CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS and similar outings. The insurmountable problem is that large numbers of observers of immeasurably variable skill and enthusiasm, using whatever technique appeals to them, spend the day haphazardly guesstimating how many birds they have seen. Although no amount of statistical sleight of hand can smooth the edges of so rough a process, the alternative, which is to impose order and consistency on the collection of the data is unthinkable because it is a social event for most participants.

BIRDSPOTTER: General term in Great Britain for a BIRDWATCHER, perhaps related to "trainspotting" and other British "spotting" hobbies.

BIRD STRIKE: Describes a collision between a bird and an airplane. The phrase subtly suggests the event is the bird's fault, as if it had attacked the plane rather

than being run over by a machine so large and fast that the bird could not get out of the way, which it certainly would have if possible.

BIRD TABLE: Britspeak for bird feeder.

BIRDWATCHER: Someone who watches birds and does not feel the need to dramatize the behavior. See BIRDER.

BIRDWATCHING: Traditional word favored by the emotionally stable. See BIRDING.

BLACKBIRD: OLD WORLD species, a member of the thrush family, unrelated to the North American blackbirds.

BLACK FLY: One of the big five (see CHIGGER). Although some other flies, especially GREENHEADS, are as bad or worse, black flies get most of the credit and attention.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Eared Grebe. Either is appropriate. See DIVER and other entries.

BLACK-THROATED BROWN: Whimsical alternative to House Sparrow created by WARBLER aficionados as a complement to the Black-throated Gray, Green, and Blue COMPLEX.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Arctic Loon, which was recently SPLIT from Pacific Loon. See DIVER.

BLACK VULTURE: Name of both an OLD WORLD and NEW WORLD species, not the same or in the same family. Confusion is frequent.

BLOCKBUSTING: BREEDING BIRD ATLAS term for blitzing an area with intense coverage. The results are superficially better than no data, which many areas would otherwise have.

BLOTTED OWL: See SPARRED OWL.

BLUEBILL: Ruddy Duck or either species of scaup. See HUNTER'S NAMES.

BLUEBIRD TRAILS: A sterling example of environmental activism, proving that we would rather put boxes along interstate highways than allow dead trees to break up the view from our back porch.

BLUE CRANE: FOLK NAME for Great Blue Heron.

BLUE DARTER: FOLK NAME for any ACCIPITER, sometimes used by BIRDWATCHERS with a penchant for hawks or showing off.

BLUE GROS: Common BIRDER shorthand for BLUE GROSBEAK.

BLUE GROSBEAK: Species in which males are blue and females brown, one of thousands of examples of birds being given descriptive names that apply only to the males. The reverse situation is nearly unknown.

BLUE LIST: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY creation in which BIRDWATCHERS submitted lists of birds they were seeing fewer of and thus were thought to be declining. Against all odds, it worked effectively as an early warning system.

BOG: Any non-tidal spot with low vegetation in which a BIRDER gets his feet wet. See MARSH.

BOGEY BIRD: BIRDER slang, originally British but now used in NORTH AMERICA, for those birds that seem to consistently elude an observer. A bird that

should have been seen but because of chance or perverseness has not. See SOD'S LAW.

BOGPUMPER: FOLK NAME, derived from the vocalization, for American Bittern, occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS.

BOGTROTTING: Catchall BIRDER jargon for deliberately going into any wet habitat.

BONXIE: Well-established British FOLK NAME for Great Skua. See BINS for motivation of use by Americans.

BOOBY: See SAPSUCKER.

BOREAL OWL: Little known, rarely seen, highly desired, perhaps common northern species found in recent decades breeding at high elevations in the southern Rocky Mountains. Found first in Colorado, the POPULATION was immediately designated RELICT, but the discovery sparked efforts in other areas and birds, long overlooked, have been confirmed almost the length of the chain, making the distinction questionable.

BOSS: Acronym for black oil sunflower seed, the most popular fill for feeders, both with humans and birds. BOSS is used by BACKYARD BIRDERS for the same exclusionary, self-congratulatory reasons that other BIRDWATCHING subcultures have invented their own jargon.

BOTTOMLESS BABY BLUES: Not the beguiling eyes of one's object of affection, but the despair of HAWKWATCHERS, clear cloudless days that make spotting hawks an agony. At some hawkwatches, more commonly referred to as THE BLUES.

BOTANIZING: Identifying the gaudiest wildflowers: how some BIRDWATCHERS pass the time when there are no birds around.

BOUNCED: BIRD BANDER term for a bird that hit the net but did not get caught or managed to free itself. Almost always spoken with dismay, as in, "I was standing right there when a Connecticut Warbler hit the net but it bounced!"

BO WAX: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Bohemian Waxwing.

BRACE: A pair of birds, members of the CHICKEN FAMILY, dead in the hand. A hunter's double header.

BRACKISH: Catch-all designation for any tidal WETLAND not immediately on the coast, used as an alternative to learning which plants distinguish freshwater and saltwater MARSHES.

BRANT: See BRENT GOOSE.

BREED: In birds, applies only to types created in captivity, such as varieties of chicken, occasionally misapplied to MORPHS and SUBSPECIES.

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS: A book showing the breeding distribution of birds within a state, but because of the lag between field work and publication, out-of-date before it appears in print.

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY: Application of the theory that if two people stand on roadsides in different states at 5:30 a.m. and count all the birds they hear in three minutes, you can use the data to draw conclusions other than the relative experience of the observers or the amount of sleep they had the night before. The data is used to set policy for the management of DECLINING SPECIES.

BREEDING RANGE: Not the area in which a bird breeds, but the area in which it has been recorded in SUMMER plus the area the author thinks it breeds in but for which he lacks evidence. See WINTER RANGE.

BREEZE: As used by BIRDWATCHERS, a light, often refreshing, movement of air too small to interfere with seeing birds. See WIND.

BRENT GOOSE: OLD WORLD name for what in NORTH AMERICA is called BRANT. BIRDERS familiar with European FIELD GUIDES are sometimes confused about which name is correct. Both are, depending on where you are, another instance of the problem created by the inability of ORNITHOLOGISTS to agree on ENGLISH NAMES.

BREWSTER'S WARBLER: Common and variable HYBRID or BACKCROSS between Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers, only marginally interesting to BIRDWATCHERS. A century of research and publication has resulted in a vast body of literature on this situation but few birdwatchers have bothered to learn even the superficial information provided in FIELD GUIDES. As a result, pure Blue-wingeds are frequently called Brewster's because they show any variation in PLUMAGE or vocalization and hybrids are frequently called Blue-wingeds despite conclusive evidence to the contrary. One of the extremely rare instances in which a hybrid retains an official, sanctioned, name of its own. See LAWRENCE'S WARBLER and SUTTON'S WARBLER.

BROADBILL: 1) Hunter's name for various WATERFOWL, especially Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Duck, occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS. 2) BIRDER nickname for Broad-billed Hummingbird. Confusion is unlikely.

BROAD-FRONT MIGRATION: Technical ornithological term for "They're everywhere!" MIGRATION not concentrated along CORRIDORS.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK: An oddly named bird because almost all closely related hawks have broader wings than this species.

BROOD: Anthropomorphic term for a bird's dependent offspring.

BROODING: Not, as in humans, worrying, but sitting on the eggs or young to protect and shelter them. Perhaps, given the uncertainty of the job, it has a double meaning.

BROOD PARASITISM: A reproductive STRATEGY in which one species deposits its egg in the nest of another. The AVIAN equivalent of dropping the kids at the sitter and skipping town without leaving a forwarding address. Publicly condemned and secretly admired.

BROOD REDUCTION: Getting rid of some of the kids so that the remainder will have a better chance of thriving. What many people wish their neighbors practiced.

BROODY FEMALE: Not an obvious redundancy, but a female bird during the incubation period. A term from the POULTRY industry that has crept into scientific and BIRDWATCHING use.

BRŪNNICH'S GUILLEMOT: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Thick-billed Murre. The lack of any overlap in the name leads to frequent confusion. See DIVER.

BS: Bachelor of Science. Among cynics, critics, and anti-intellectuals, BS has an older, earthier version, as in, "He's full of BS." See MS.

BTB: Common BIRDER shorthand for Black-throated Blue Warbler.

BTG: Common BIRDER shorthand for Black-throated Green Warbler, but in the West sometimes used for Black-throated Gray. Which is meant depends on the circumstances and the user.

BUFFALO BIRD: Old name for Brown-headed Cowbird, unfortunately not true. The buffalo are gone but cowbird populations are growing faster than we can keep track of.

BUFFIE: Common BIRDER shorthand for both Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Bufflehead. Which is meant can usually be deduced by the season or the circumstances.

BULLBAT: Inexplicable name for Common Nighthawk, sometimes self-consciously adopted by BIRDWATCHERS.

BUNGEE STRAP: A flexible neck strap for BINOCULARS that reduces strain on the neck by providing some bounce. When the observer is running full out in hopes of seeing a bird someone else has spotted, the strap allows the binoculars to bounce from belt to chin.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT: Federal lobbying group for cattle ranchers and mining interests.

BURGOMASTER: FOLK NAME for Great Black-backed Gull, in honor of its status as the largest gull in the world; occasionally used by BIRDERS. Also, historical name for Glaucous Gull.

BUSHTIT: Small nondescript species whose name is the source of much juvenile male humor about female researchers in remote areas.

BUSTARD: A family of OLD WORLD birds, not a typo.

BUTCHERBIRD: A shrike, for the habit, widely viewed as disgusting, of impaling its prey on thorns for easier handling, much as humans do when making shish kebab.

BUTEO: Any of a genus of hawks known for their broad wings and soaring behavior. Much emotional blood has been spilt among a very few EXPERTS over the pronunciation. Traditionalists favor "BEAUTY-o," while those in thrall to European expertise favor "BOOT-e-o." Nobody else cares.

BUTTERBALL: Bufflehead: See HUNTER'S NAMES.

BUTTERBUTT: BIRDWATCHER for YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER.

BUZZARD: In the OLD WORLD, any of a large family of hawks: In NORTH AMERICA, where the word has no ornithological context, a cantankerous old man.

BVD: Better View Desired. Used to describe any GOOD BIRD seen briefly or not well.

BWP: Common BIRDER shorthand for *BIRDS OF THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC*.

BYCATCH: Euphemism for the species commercial fishermen catch in their nets inadvertently, such as dolphins and various SEABIRDS. The experience is invariably fatal to the catchee and can significantly affect local populations, but any proposal to limit bycatch is angrily resisted as unreasonable.

CAGE BIRDS: Homegrown species having roughly the same relation to wild birds that miniature poodles have to wolves and dingoes.

CAGO: Banders code for Canada Goose, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced "KAY-goo."

CAIN AND ABEL SYNDROME: Fairly clever ornithological term for the practice of larger NESTLINGS dispatching the runt of the litter.

CALIDRIS: Genus of small SHOREBIRDS, sometimes collectively called SANDPIPERS or PEEPS. The identification of many of them is so difficult that it is the mountain most BIRDWATCHERS cannot conquer or refuse to even try.

CALIFORNIA CONDOR: An ENDANGERED SPECIES, the most contentious within the BIRDWATCHING community. The debate, which almost came to blows, was over whether to leave the dwindling number in place or to try a chancy and unproved CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAM, which was the ultimate choice. Despite honest disagreement, there is some truth to the contention that captive breeding proponents were enthusiastic about having the opportunity to handle and manipulate so spectacular a bird and were driven in part by the large sums of money available. On the other side, some opponents were moved by the realization that the bird would no longer be available and that under the arcane rules of listing they would have to wait decades before it became countable again.

CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER: The third great PLACEHOLDER species. See ENDANGERED SPECIES (Definition 2).

CALL: Name given to any vocalization given by any bird, including the occasional discreet belch, that is not obviously a song. Most birds have wide and complicated vocabularies of which songs are only a small part. Call is a catch-all term used because not much is known about the range of bird vocalizations and because even active BIRDERS have not bothered to learn what is known.

CALL NOTE: An arbitrary designation of any single note given by a bird, irrespective of its meaning or context. See CALL.

CAMP ROBBER: FOLK NAME, still popular, for Gray Jay because of the species' habit of coming close in search of handouts and occasionally landing onto the hands of campers. [*Ed.: Common name now Canada Jay.*]

CAN or **CANNIE**: Not clever, but cutesy BIRDER shorthand for Canvasback.

CANADIAN-AMERICAN GEESE: BIRDWATCHER alternative, increasingly popular, for Canada Geese, because the species has spread, as a result of introductions, over most of the UNITED STATES

CANADIAN GOOSE: Very common mistake, both among BIRDWATCHERS and the general public, for Canada Goose, apparently under the impression that the name of a political entity cannot serve as an adjective, despite Bahama Swallow, Kentucky Warbler, and a score of others.

CANARY: FOLK NAME for any small, yellow bird. See WILD CANARY for occasional distinction.

CANARY IN THE MINE: Popular phrase among environmentalists for the use of WILDLIFE, primarily birds because they are sensitive and easy to monitor, as early warning systems for environmental catastrophe, much as early miners used caged canaries to warn them of the presence of dangerous gases. The difference is that when the canary died the miners fled to the surface for safety. We, on the other hand, who use birds to monitor the health of the entire planet, have no place else to go.

CANDIDATE: As in the frequently heard expression, "I think I have a candidate...," used when one member of a group of BIRDWATCHERS searching for a previously reported RARITY sees any bird they do not immediately recognize. When the search reaches a desperation threshold, the number of candidates sighted would awe even an Iowa voter at caucus time.

CAN'T MISS: A bird you are guaranteed to see unless you make the mistake of saying so in advance. See MORTAL LOCK.

CANUSA: Failed attempt to create a new name for the BIRDWATCHER's version of NORTH AMERICA, from Canada and USA.

CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY: The Colonial Williamsburg of BIRDING HOTSPOTS.

CAPITALIZATION OF BIRD NAMES: A minor war, waged by editors. General style MANUALS insist on lower case while most ornithological and BIRDING journals use upper case. In examples like "yellow warbler," lower case often results in confusion.

CAPON: Bobbitized chicken. [*Ed.: For context, look up John and Lorena Bobbitt.*]

CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAM: The school of thought that it is cheaper to breed birds in cages than to preserve habitat. A money tree fertilized by the ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

CAROLINA WREN: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

CARPAL: Technical term meaning "of the wrist," useful because on some birds contrasting patterns provide a clue to identification, as in the carpal bar on the underside of the wing of a Red-tailed Hawk, and because most BIRDWATCHERS could no more find the wrist on a bird than they could MOLT. The "wrist" on birds is roughly in the center of the wing, where it seems to bend slightly. Because birds have no easily recognizable "elbow," the area from the wrist to the body is all of a piece. Surprisingly, there is no precise technical word for this area and it is frequently referred to as the "inner wing."

CARP-SHINNED HAWK: HAWKWATCHER cute for Osprey.

CARRYING CAPACITY: The number of individuals of a given species the existing habitat can support. A significant component of the calculation is how many individuals humans are willing to tolerate before it becomes a PEST SPECIES.

CASUAL: Describes a bird that persists in showing up where we do not expect it to. See ACCIDENTAL.

CASUAL BIRDWATCHER: Someone who watches birds but has not let their interest dominate other hobbies and pleasures. By far the most common, and least celebrated, member of the fraternity.

CATESBY, MARK: Brilliant and important early American ORNITHOLOGIST and explorer whose name and accomplishments are virtually unknown among BIRDWATCHERS because no species are named after him.

CEDAR BIRD: FOLK NAME for Cedar Waxwing, occasionally used by older bird watchers and BACKYARD BIRDERS.

CENTURY RUN: In the old days, before BIRDERS got obsessive about them, the ultimate goal of a BIG DAY, 100 species. In most areas, 100 species is now considered the halfway point.

CHAPARRAL BIRD: Local name for Greater Roadrunner.

CHASER: A BIRDER willing to abandon all personal and professional obligations whenever a GOOD BIRD is within striking distance. Very few BIRDERS will admit to it, and the disclaimer, "I am not really a chaser." means, "It depends on how good it is and how far away and how much trouble I will get into if I go."

CHASE TRIP: A nearly always fruitless, popular, hastily-organized PELAGIC TRIP the day after a great RARITY was found. Although the chance of refinding a single, highly nomadic bird in a vast ocean is too small to be calculated, it does allow organizers to fill a boat on an otherwise off-day, a minor economic windfall that the participants support enthusiastically.

CHAT GROUP: Electronic (e-mail, Internet) discussion group. Comparable in most cases to bad, rambling, incoherent, alcohol-poisoned, late-night barroom talk, the participants freed of all restraint by relative anonymity.

CHEAT SHEET: Wry BIRDER lingo for a SIGHTINGS LIST.

CHEBEC: Imitative name for Least Flycatcher, taken from the CALL. It is confusing to many BIRDWATCHERS, to whom all *EMPIDONAX* FLYCATCHERS sound alike.

CHERNOBYL SWALLOW: Any albino or partly albino bird, after the swallows nesting near the NUCLEAR POWER PLANT in the Soviet Union. After the meltdown there was a marked increase in the incidence of ALBINISM in birds breeding there.

CHERRY BIRD: Not, as modern slang would indicate, a terrific or rare bird (as in, "What a cherry bird!"), but an old name for Cedar Waxwing because of its fondness for the fruit.

CHEWINK: FOLK NAME, still used by a few BIRDWATCHERS, for Eastern (was Rufous-sided) Towhee. The name is a very rough approximation of one of the common CALLS.

CHICK: Gender-neutral term for a baby bird, thus making it possible for BIRDWATCHERS to say, "Look at that gorgeous chick!", without looking over their shoulders to see who might be listening.

CHICKEN FAMILY: Mildly and superciliously derogatory name given by many BIRDWATCHERS to the group of birds that includes quail, grouse, pheasants, and turkeys because they are so intensely managed as GAME SPECIES. See PTARMIGAN.

CHICKEN HAWK: Any hawk found within ten miles of a dead chicken, irrespective of its desire or ability to kill barnyard fowl. Chicken hawks are considered PEST SPECIES and may be shot with impunity.

CHIGGER: One of the big five species of insects most hated by BIRDWATCHERS because they feast on humans and the process is painful. Chiggers are among the worst because they are too small to see, the itching is maddening, it lasts for days, and most remedies are not as effective as advertised.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: A social activity that requires spending eight hours walking in subzero temperatures or standing in a pouring rain for the opportunity to spend two hours trading stories with forty like souls about the birds you did not quite see, while eating vegetarian chili and drinking herbal tea. A century-old tradition and the highlight of the BIRDING year. But see NAMC.

CHUM: Foul mixture of oil, fish parts, and popcorn tossed overboard on PELAGIC TRIPS to attract SEABIRDS. Experienced pelagic BIRDERS know that the most effective chum is the offerings of the poor souls suffering the ravages of advanced seasickness, but there is no proof that trip leaders are so insensitive that they encourage participants to breakfast on delicacies such as creamed chipped beef or hash because they make better chum.

CHUMMING: 1) Luring SEABIRDS to the boat with CHUM. 2) Advanced stage of seasickness involving throwing-up over the rail, thus attracting seabirds.

CLEARCUTTING: A form of timber harvest that employs the same thoughtful technique that skinheads bring to hair care.

CLIMATE: The seasonal pattern of precipitation, temperature, WIND, and sunshine that characterizes an area, the assessment usually made only after at least 75 years' worth of data have been collected. Not, as it is too often used, a synonym for WEATHER.

CLINCH: Britspeak for positively identifying a rare bird. The UNITED STATES equivalent is "confirmed."

CLING RAIL: BIRDER shorthand for "its either a Clapper or a King Rail," useful because it is nearly impossible to separate the two by voice and extremely difficult even when the bird is well seen, which is rare.

CLOACAL KISS: Semi-delicate euphemism for what in most birds passes for COPULATION. See PENIS.

CLOSE FOCUS: Specialized, expensive adaptation available on high-powered BINOCULARS that makes it possible to focus on a point so close to the observer that binoculars are not necessary. Useful for watching butterflies.

COATING: Substance applied to the lenses of BINOCULARS and TELESCOPES by the manufacturers to improve image quality, not the various substances applied by BIRDERS eating in the field or who leave optics under the seat, all of which counteract the original intention.

COB: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a male swan. See DRAKE.

COCK: Term used in Britain, where they are much more relaxed about this sort of thing, to refer to any male bird. See TIT.

CODE OF ETHICS: A set of rules for BIRDWATCHERS promulgated on the assumption that the motives of the observer matter to a bird flushed from a nest.

COLD FRONT: WEATHER pattern revered by BIRDERS because it triggers most MIGRATION in the FALL.

COLLECTING: Euphemism used to draw a distinction between what a scientist does with a shotgun and what a hunter does with a shotgun. Stuffing, but not eating, what you kill.

COLONIAL SPECIES: Any bird that prefers to mate in close proximity to large numbers of its own kind. In birds, this is referred to as reproductive STRATEGY: In humans it is called bigotry.

COMFORT BEHAVIOR: Any action, such as stretching, yawning, scratching, or belching, that makes an organism feel physically better. The designation of such actions as comforting to birds is based on the assumption that what makes us feel good must make them feel good as well.

COMMIC TERN: Widespread BIRDER shorthand for "its either a Common or an Arctic Tern," useful because the two are so difficult to tell apart in the field.

COMMON: Any bird you can regularly find but is never around when you want to show it to someone else. See UNCOMMON.

COMMON EGRET: See GREAT EGRET.

COMMON GALLINULE: See COMMON MOORHEN.

COMMON GULL: See MEW GULL.

COMMON MOORHEN: Inexplicably, no nomenclatural decision by the AOU has angered and disoriented BIRDWATCHERS more than changing the name of COMMON GALLINULE to Common Moorhen. Most BIRDERS simply cannot incorporate the change. [*Ed.: The common name has been changed back to Common Gallinule*]

COMMON NAME: Meaningless term thought by most BIRDWATCHERS to refer to the official ENGLISH NAME of a species. It can, but it can also be the FOLK NAME or anything else the bird is called.

COMMON SCOTER: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Black Scoter. See DIVER. [*Ed.: The two species are now split.*]

COMMON TEAL: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Green-winged Teal. See DIVER. When the two were lumped, North American ORNITHOLOGISTS did not change the name, a move that seems prescient now that there is some evidence that they should be treated as separate species again. [*Ed.: Old World name also Teal or Eurasian Teal.*]

COMMUNITY: Theoretically, the species found in a particular habitat; limited by the diligence, experience, and access of the observer.

COMPETITIVE EXCLUSION: Efforts designed to discourage or displace other species that would otherwise share the same resources. Copied successfully by many major corporations.

COMPLEX: Any grouping whose members are hard to categorize or which has complicating or confounding interactions, such as the LARGE WHITE-HEADED GULL complex or the Golden-winged/Blue-winged Warbler complex. Too often extended to cover any situation the user does not understand.

COMPOST: Not the glutinous mess (i.e., compote) that keeps blueberries from rolling off the pancakes, but a personal landfill.

COMPRESSED: Technical term for a BILL that is taller than it is wide, as in puffins. BIRDWATCHERS refer to them as tall or funny looking. See DEPRESSED.

CONFUSING FALL WARBLERS: A specious roadblock thrown up in the path of beginning BIRDWATCHERS by authors unwilling or unable to believe that novices can or want to deal with more subtle identification criteria. The vast majority of warblers are no more difficult to identify in the FALL than in the SPRING, save that they are not singing.

CONGENER: Scientific lingo for "member of the same family of birds."

CONNECTICUT WARBLER: One of numerous species named for a specific locality, usually the one where it was first collected, even though it is often rare there. Such names. although inappropriate and misleading, persist because under

the rules of NOMENCLATURE it is nearly impossible to change them. Other obvious examples include Mississippi Kite, Virginia Rail, Key West Quail-Dove, Carolina Wren, Philadelphia Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, and Nashville Warbler. We can only be grateful that the first Western Kingbird was not a VAGRANT taken in Boston.

CONSPECIFIC: Interim designation given to birds currently treated as the same species.

CONSTANT WHITEWATER: Recent political jargon for cascading crises, a condition perpetuated by fund-raising organizations. [*Ed.: For context, look up Whitewater controversy.*]

CONSUMPTIVE RECREATION: Killing animals for amusement. See NONCONSUMPTIVE RECREATION.

COOP: Very common BIRDER and HAWKWATCHER shorthand for Cooper's Hawk. See SHARPIE.

COOPERATIVE BREEDING: The AVIAN equivalent of hiring a nanny or using members of your extended family to take care of the kids. Recent studies have shown that it is nowhere near as rare as once thought.

COOT AND CARP SERVICE: Critics' version of USF&WS and DNR employees, reflecting both the belief that they are concerned primarily with GAME SPECIES and that most of them are older and spend the bulk of their time complaining.

COPULATION: In birds this has a very high frequency rate but lasts only a few seconds. Occasionally presented as proof that human males, but not females, share a common evolutionary ancestor with birds.

CORMORANT: 1) ABUNDANT waterbird responsible for many reports of out-of-range ANHINGAS by BIRDWATCHERS who do not know that cormorants perch in trees and soar. 2) OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Great Cormorant. See SWALLOW.

CORRIDOR: 1) A known MIGRATION path or route, narrow enough to be definable. See BROAD-FRONT MIGRATION. 2) Recently expanded to mean a narrow strip of habitat, usually riparian woodland, connecting two larger tracts and claimed to be critical to migrating warblers. Critics claim it is an unproven excuse to protect habitat.

CORVID: Member of the crow family. See PARULID.

COSMIC MIND-BLOWER: British BIRDWATCHING slang for an extreme RARITY, a once in a lifetime find. The British have a hierarchy of rarity and an established terminology for it, unlike UNITED STATES BIRDERS, who use an unpredictable variety of adjectives to describe their finds. See CRIPPLING, MEGATICK, GOOD BIRD, WORTH HAVING.

COSMOPOLITAN: Science speak for "found so close to everywhere as to make no real difference." Sometimes used as a slightly friendlier synonym for PANDEMIC.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS: Political precondition that makes it impossible to justify any government regulation or action.

COUES, ELLIOT: Early American ORNITHOLOGIST whose name was at one time attached to a species of FLYCATCHER, now called Greater Pewee. The

pronunciation was among the most tortured and botched of all those so honored. It is correctly "COWS."

COULEE: What Easterners in the West call any riverbed, dry wash, small canyon, ditch, or hole in the ground. Westerners rarely use the term.

COUNTABILITY: The "How-Many-Angels-Can-Dance-On-The-Head-Of-A-Pin" conundrum of LISTERS, a bottomless pit of anxiety over whether a bird can be fairly added to a list

COUNTING: Bird counts are conducted under strict guidelines. A flock is a group of birds small enough so that an accurate count can be made. A large flock is a group small enough so a reasonable estimate can be made. A huge flock is a group so large that the estimate is uncertain. An immense flock is a group so large that you cannot admit to anyone the number that popped into your head.

COUNTY LIST: All the birds an observer has seen in one county. The game of county listing has begun to challenge state listing in many areas, the effort required being very modest, as is the recognition for excelling. See STATE LIST.

COURTSHIP: Any of a variety of ritualized behaviors designed to get the babe or, when done mutually, to seal the deal.

COURTSHIP FEEDING: The AVIAN equivalent of taking the girl out to dinner, although with birds you have to bring the meal to her. In either case, the male is intent on the same result.

COVEY: A bunch of quail in a tight group with the implication of a close, perhaps family, relationship. Compare with BEVY for marginal distinction.

CRAMP: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for *BIRDS OF THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC*. [*Ed.: Chief Editor is Stanley Cramp.*]

CRANE: FOLK NAME for any heron, used by people whose only knowledge of birds come from television nature specials and from folklore.

CREATIONISTS: Those who have made a science out of resisting science.

CREATION SCIENCE: The deliberate, tortured application of science to faith in an effort to give it credibility. It is no more science than astrology.

CRECHE: Daycare for birds, the gathering of a large number of recently fledged young under the watchful eye of a few adults.

CREEK: Flowing water easy to cross. See RIVER, STREAM.

CREPUSCULAR: Technically describes a bird that is primarily active at DUSK and dawn, but commonly applied to nocturnal species because that is when BIRDWATCHERS almost always see them.

CRIPPLING: British BIRDWATCHING slang for a very good bird. See COSMIC MIND-BLOWER.

CRISIS: Any situation sufficiently complicated that it can be used to generate contributions.

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED: Designation for birds with populations so small and under such direct assault, that only immediate and massive intervention, always disruptive to some interests, can save them. The last, tenuous rung on the ladder to extinction. In the UNITED STATES, the distinction is not recognized. See ENDANGERED SPECIES.

CRONISM: The act of parent birds swallowing a weak, injured, or sickly NESTLING, a practical ADAPTATION that humans cannot quite stomach.

CROSS FOSTERING: Technique that uses closely related and common species to incubate the eggs and raise the young of rare ones. The equivalent of letting the family down the block raise your kids while assuming they will retain their loyalty to you. Sometimes it works. But see WHOOPHILL.

CRYPTIC: Said of species that blend in well with their surroundings or are taxonomically confusing. Because it is applied to birds that we have trouble finding or that confuse us, it says more about humans than birds.

CULLING: Management technique that consists of killing those animals we believe nature would dispose of if it knew what it was doing.

CUSTOMER: Slightly bizarre, unaccountably popular term some FEEDER WATCHERS and BACKYARD BIRDWATCHERS use to describe the birds visiting their feeders. Perhaps an indication of how completely business culture has contaminated our thought.

CYGNET: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a young swan. See DRAKE.

DABBLING DUCK/DIVING DUCK: Conveniently for BIRDWATCHERS and FIELD GUIDE authors, ducks break roughly into two equal groups. Those, such a MALLARDS, who feed by grazing or by tipping up, are known as dabblers. Those that pursue prey underwater are known as divers. Most birdwatchers have a slight preference for diving ducks because they are scarce away from large bodies of water and are thus more likely to qualify as GOOD BIRDS in most areas.

DABCHICK: FOLK NAME for Pied-billed Grebe, self-consciously adopted by some BIRDWATCHERS.

DAM: Hated by environmentalists, many of whom are BIRDERS, because it interrupts the free flow of RIVERS, and loved by birders, many of whom are environmentalists, because it is a bird magnet.

DARTER: FOLK NAME for ANHINGA, self-consciously adopted by some BIRDWATCHERS.

DATA DEFICIENT: Grudging admission that not enough information exists to draw conclusions, the language subtly suggesting the fault lies with the species being studied rather than the researcher. Saying a project is data deficient is the alternative to saying "I didn't work hard enough."

DAY LIST: The list of birds seen by an individual or group during a day of BIRDING, often including a "within an ORDER OF MAGNITUDE" approximation of the number of individuals seen of each species. The list invariably includes all the birds known to be COMMON in the area, whether or not anyone bothered to notice or comment on them because it would be unthinkable to produce a list without them. See TRIP LIST.

DBH: Diameter at Breast Height. A commonly used assessment of habitat, especially in bird studies, used to calculate tree, not researcher, size. A simple and useful method requiring nothing more than a person, presumably of average height, and a tape measure.

DDT: The Great Satan of pesticides. Having won the battle at home, we live in a self-congratulatory haze while it is applied in vast amounts just beyond our borders and far more pernicious chemicals, such as PCBs, accumulate in the environment at levels we probably can never mitigate.

DECLINING SPECIES: 1) Any bird whose POPULATION is getting smaller. 2) Any species you are seeing fewer of, based on uncertain memory and irrespective of the fact that your hearing and eyesight are failing.

DECURVED: Curving downward, as in the BILLS of curlews. Lack of instruction in Latin, and English, in the public schools has left many BIRDWATCHERS confused about which direction the curvature goes. See RECURVED.

DEEP WATER DROPSY: Seasickness.

DEET: Chemical found in some commercial INSECT REPELLENTS, one of only two that actually works. Manufacturers, knowing their public, have invoked the "if some works, then more must be better" school of marketing, even though tests show that any concentration over 30 per cent is wasted. The very high concentrations, up to 100 per cent in some brands, have an entertaining side benefit: they melt plastic, take the armoring off of BINOCULARS, and can remove the paint from cars. See PERMETHRIN.

DEFORESTATION: Scientific-sounding euphemism for getting rid of the trees. See CLEARCUTTING.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES/FISH AND GAME PERSONNEL: WILDLIFE managers with guns. The majority of public servants whose job it is to preserve and restore bird populations are active hunters.

DEPARTURE DATE: The last day in SPRING or FALL in which a species is seen in a given area. Departure dates are even less precise than ARRIVAL DATES because they require an observer to remember, and report, when they did not see a bird rather than when they did.

DEPRESSED: Technical term for a BILL that is wider than it is tall, as in most DUCKS. BIRDWATCHERS refer to them as flat. See COMPRESSED.

DIAGNOSTIC: The most popular, overused, and abused word in the identification lexicon. A FIELD MARK, such as the white head and tail of a BALD EAGLE, is considered diagnostic when it positively establishes the identification of the bird. Every bird has diagnostic field marks in theory. In practice, the degree to which they are diagnostic depends on how well they are seen and the experience and temperament of the observer. The very word often provides BIRDWATCHERS with an undeserved confidence that leads to misidentification.

DIAGNOSTIC ARROWS: The heart of the PETERSON SYSTEM, arrows added to the FIELD GUIDE plates pointing at key FIELD MARKS. A great many BIRDWATCHERS, and almost all older ones, grew up with the system. A few, never progressing beyond the determination to put a name on every bird and uninterested in watching them beyond that, still see birds only as a series of field marks.

DIALECT: Simplified explanation for the discovery that birds sound more like their neighbors than they do like birds farther away. Dialects exist until more detailed studies are done. The failure to detect dialects is often the result of too little research also.

DC CORM: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Double-crested Cormorant.

DICKEYBIRDS: Dismissive term used to include all small landbirds, mostly unidentified and mostly COMMON. Popular among those people who want to make it clear they cannot be bothered with such AVIAN detritus and are only

interested in the rare and the gaudy. Often obscures the fact that the observer cannot identify most of the small, common birds in the area.

DICKLEDEE: Really intolerable cutesy variation of "chickadee," marginally styled after one of the common vocalizations. Normally limited to BIRD LOVERS, some BACKYARD BIRDWATCHERS, and five-year-olds.

DIFFERENTIAL MIGRATION: In many species, young birds migrate farther south than adults, and females travel farther than males. Our ability to track differential migration is largely dependent on the ability of BIRDWATCHERS who practice AGEING and SEXING, skills that are poorly developed in an activity that is defined by recognition of birds at the species level.

DIP IN: Brit for CHASING and seeing a rare bird. The UNITED STATES equivalent is the straightforward, "I got the..."

DIP OUT: Brit for CHASING, but not seeing, a rare bird. There is no non-profane UNITED STATES equivalent.

DISJUNCT: Said of a breeding POPULATION of birds whose location is disconnected from the normal range. Because most habitat is discontinuous, the distinction is arbitrary. But see OUTLIER and RELICT.

DISPERSAL: Term used to describe the tendency of birds, typically teenagers, to wander aimlessly as soon as they are old enough to leave home.

DISPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR: Technical term for why a four-ounce bird eats a worm rather than attacking a large predator eating the contents of the nest, the equivalent of watching reruns of the Home Shopping Network the night of April 14th rather than finishing your tax return.

DISRUPTIVE COLORATION: Any pattern or intensity of PLUMAGE that makes an animal hard to see. Whether predators find the same pattern as disruptive as humans is speculative.

DISTRACTION DISPLAY: The endearing little fit a bird throws because you are too stupid to realize you are standing on its nest.

DIVER: What in NORTH AMERICA are called LOONS are called divers in the rest of the world. Under the complicated rules of TAXONOMY, diver is the older name and, technically, should be adopted here. We do not because we are attached to loon and because the International Court does not rule on issues of taxonomy, and, most importantly, because the change would be culturally wrenching, requiring the renaming of numerous magazines, organizations, and nonprofit groups as well as the abandonment of a number of proverbs, adages, and folk sayings.

DLE (DEAD LAKE EFFECT): Horrible concession that so many lakes have been rendered biologically sterile by acid rain and other forms of POLLUTION that it is useful to have a standardized term and acronym for it.

DNA/DNA HYBRIDIZATION: A recently developed technique that permits scientists to compare the DNA of various birds in an attempt to determine how closely they are related. Analogous to transubstantiation, magic as performed by the high priests of ornithology. See ELECTROPHORESIS.

DNR (DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES): But Damned Near Ridiculous in the view of those who oppose what they see as aggressive action in defense of habitat and species and the oppressive application of regulation. See

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES/FISH AND GAME PERSONNEL.

DOCK MALLARDS: Fairly common BIRDER name for the DUCKS of uncertain parentage and highly variable PLUMAGE that hang around piers, marinas, and community PONDS cadging handouts. Mistakenly thought by many people to be birds.

DOCUMENTATION: The idea that if a BIRDWATCHER finds a rare bird, it is more believable if he or she copies a list of FIELD MARKS from the FIELD GUIDE and submits it to a RECORDS COMMITTEE.

DODGY BIRD: British term for a rare bird that may turn out to be an ESCAPE or uncountable for other reasons. A bird may retain dodgy status for years before the designated committee rules on its provenance.

DOF: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Depth of Field, a characteristic of BINOCULARS and TELESCOPES. The general guidelines are that the higher the power and the lower the cost, the shallower the depth of field, meaning less of what you see is in focus. In inexpensive, high-powered telescopes, the DOF is infinitesimal and even the object being watched cannot be kept in focus if it is breathing.

DOMESTIC FOWL: Chickens, not birds.

DOR (DEAD ON ROAD): Term for a bird that has fallen victim to an automobile but is not so mangled as to be unrecognizable. See ROADKILL, LIFELESS LIST.

DORSAL: Science for the upper side of the bird, as in, "the vireo was green dorsally." See VENTRAL.

DOVE: Any of the smaller members of the family. See PIGEON.

DOW: Very common BIRDER shorthand for dowitcher. Used with the full names, as in Long-billed Dow and Short-billed Dow and rarely shortened even further as LB Dow and SB Dow. Also, commonly as Dow SP. because most birders cannot tell the two apart at any season.

DRAKE: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a male DUCK. Adopted by some BIRDWATCHERS under the mistaken belief that it makes them sound tonier.

DRAWDOWN: The equivalent of Surf's Up! for a BIRDWATCHER, the lowering of water in a LAKE, RESERVOIR, or impoundment, thus creating MUDFLATS, a prime SHOREBIRD habitat in MIGRATION. In many areas, drawdowns provide the only opportunity to add shorebirds to local lists.

DREDGED MATERIAL CONTAINMENT FACILITY: The new name for a DREDGE SPOIL IMPOUNDMENT because the word spoil was viewed negatively.

DREDGE SPOIL IMPOUNDMENT: Bird magnet passionately defended by BIRDERS against other components of the environmental lobby.

DRIFT: Popular but controversial theory that birds are displaced during MIGRATION by strong WINDS. HAWKWATCHERS especially love the drift theory as an explanation for why they are seeing fewer birds at their favorite location.

DRIVE-BY BIRDING: BIRDING without getting out of the car or even stopping unless something special is seen. Evidence that the traditional BIRDWATCHING

culture is being subsumed by late 20th Century life is that drive-by birding is no longer merely incidental, but deliberate.

DRIVER: Boat captain on a PELAGIC TRIP. Good drivers know the birds, are willing to burn fuel chasing rarities, and accommodate all the quirks of pelagic BIRDERS. Bad drivers always get back to the dock early. Both charge the same.

DRUMMING: Not how the musically untalented participate, but the way woodpeckers communicate. A great deal of time has been wasted trying to discern if individual species can be recognized by the speed or pattern of their drumming.

DRUNK BIRDS: It happens. Berry-eating species, especially waxwings and robins, occasionally gorge themselves on fruit that has fermented on the vine, with predictable results. Humans, perhaps remembering their own experiences, are perpetually amused by the spectacle.

DRY TORTUGAS: Islands at the tip of the Florida Keys, the ATTU of the Southeast, less expensive and less productive.

DUCK: Grudgingly conceded to be a bird by most avid BIRDERS, unless it is locally rare, in which case it is enthusiastically pursued.

DUCK STAMP: Federal subsidy for artists and speculators; Secondarily a license to shoot birds we are spending millions of dollars attempting to increase.

DUDDY RUCK: Uninspired but surprisingly common deliberate spoonerism for Ruddy Duck.

DUDE: British BIRDWATCHING lingo for a staid, unexcited, usually older BIRDWATCHER, definitely not a TWITCHER. The closest UNITED STATES equivalent is the "little-old-lady-in-tennis-shoes" cliché. Gaining a foothold in NORTH AMERICA.

DUN'L: Common BIRDER shorthand for Dunlin, perhaps originating as imitative of the nautical "fo'c'sle."

DUSK: The critical half-hour in the evening when it is still light enough to see birds but too dark to identify them, thus resulting in a disproportionate number of rarities.

EAGLE: Almost any large bird seen by a non-BIRDWATCHER and by a depressing number of BEGINNING BIRDERS.

EAR PATCH: Contrasting area of feathers behind a bird's eye, sometimes helpful in identification, especially in SPARROWS. The heads of sparrows are usually subtle shades of brown and the ear patch is more evident in FIELD GUIDE art than in the field.

EARTH DAY: Event originally created to draw attention to environmental issues. It has become a predictable hash of blandly reassuring speeches, social gatherings, marketing, and an excuse to go to the local park or spend part of the day BIRDWATCHING.

EARTH FIRST!: The Baader-Meinhof Gang of land-based ECO-TERRORISTS. See SEA SHEPHERD SOCIETY. [*Ed.: For context, look up Red Army Faction.*]

EARTH FRIENDLY: Said of products that, according to their promoters, do not damage the environment. As more and more products are declared Earth Friendly, skepticism about the value of the designation has grown.

ECDYSIS: The shedding of feathers, à la Sally Rand without the attitude.

ECO-: Originally a prefix referring to nature, it has been so indiscriminately applied that it is now meaningless.

ECO-FREAK: See KNEE-JERK ENVIRONMENTALIST and other entries.

ECO-HYPOCRISY: Synonym for GREEN-COLLAR FRAUD.

ECO-ISOLATIONISM: The evolving American position. The UNITED STATES has demanded that the international community solve such problems as acid rain, GLOBAL WARMING, and overfishing but has steadfastly refused to sign on to the resulting treaties. See NIMBY.

ECOLABELING: Putting information on products designed to show how damaging to the environment their production or use is. The damage is relative and the labels are often striking examples of creative interpretation. The purpose is to reach the GREEN CONSUMERISM market.

ECOLOGICAL BACKLASH: The unintended consequences, sometimes disastrous and expensive, of HABITAT ALTERATION and modification, even when made with the best of intentions. Viewed, with grim satisfaction, by some environmentalists, as nature's revenge, a pretty conceit that ignores the fact that nature is RANDOM.

ECOLOGICAL ERA: A fantasy, the belief by pseudo-religious nature lovers that we are about to enter a golden era of ecological righteousness. Most scientists think the opposite is true.

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT: Term, trying to fight its way out of the jargon category, for the amount of land it takes to provide food, water, shelter, and other amenities for one person. For Americans, it is twelve acres. In less developed countries, it is one acre. Unless the ecological footprint can be substantially reduced, it is impossible to bring the rest of the world up to the UNITED STATES standard.

ECOLOGISM: Deliberate oversimplification or distortion of an ecological fact or axiom for political purposes. A recent formation necessitated by the increasing frequency of such mistruths, a natural result of the growing importance of the environment as a political issue. THE EARTH HEALS ITSELF is a common example. See GREENSCAMMING.

ECONOMIC ORNITHOLOGY: Late 19th Century view that birds should be judged on the basis of their positive or negative economic effect on humans. Although discredited nearly a century ago, it remains the predominate philosophy of conservatives.

ECOPSYCHOLOGY: New Age indulgence, the study of the effect of the natural world on human psychology. A recently defined discipline that depends largely on intuition and self-examination as research techniques.

ECOSYSTEM: All the habitat you can see while standing in one spot or all the habitat contained in any site someone wishes to protect.

ECOTAGE: Driving nails in trees and pouring sugar into the gas tanks of bulldozers. See ECO-TERRORISTS.

ECO-TERRORISTS: Self-indulgent pranksters justifying middle-class guerrilla fantasies by claiming that driving nails into trees and disabling bulldozers will stop development and preserve habitat.

ECO-TOURISM: The fastest growing segment of the tourist industry. Although it is last on the list of threats to birds and habitat, it remains the whipping-boy of BIRDWATCHERS who lack the funds to join tours to exotic places.

EDGE SPECIES: A species that lives preferentially at the junction of two habitats, such as field and woods. At the rate we are turning forests into woodlots, many of the world's birds are being forced into becoming edge species, with predictable consequences. See OBLIGATE.

EFFECTIVE POPULATION SIZE: Those members of a given species capable of reproducing, the number always smaller, sometimes significantly so, than the total POPULATION. Although individuals that cannot reproduce are biologically irrelevant, the distinction is generally ignored by those people making WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT decisions based on population.

EGG BOUND: Breech delivery.

EGG DUMPING: Forced adoption. Like BROOD PARASITISM, but eggs are deposited in the nests of the same species.

EGGER: Someone who gathers eggs for economic reasons rather than for science or personal accumulation, a distinction lost on the birds.

EGGING: Not, as one might assume from the entries on AGEING and SEXING, the determination that the object is an egg, but the now discredited practice of collecting the eggs of wild birds.

EGRET: The word is a source of pronunciation confusion for many BIRDWATCHERS. The most common version is two syllables, long "E" and "gret" as in regret (but often as "grit"), the accent on the first. Less common is the version with the accent on the second syllable. Both are acceptable but the first is preferred.

EIDER: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Common Eider. See SWALLOW.

EIS: See ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

E KING: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Eastern Kingbird. Although there are other kingbirds, the shortening is not applied to them, although the "bird" may sometimes be dropped, as in Western King.

ELECTROPHORESIS: Recently developed scientific technique that permits comparison of the genetics of closely related birds. A lower form of magic practiced by graduate students and other priestly assistants. See DNA/DNA HYBRIDIZATION.

EL NIÑO: Cyclical WEATHER event that is a convenient explanation for any variation in bird behavior, including migrations, IRRUPTIONS, and whether the mockingbird moved from your neighbor's yard to yours.

***EMPIDONAX* FLYCATCHER**: Between one and twenty nearly indistinguishable species. The number depends on whether anyone has recently perceived a minor variation in CALL or behavior.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: 1) An animal whose POPULATION is sufficiently low. See ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. 2) PLACEHHOLDER; an animal in no immediate danger of extinction used as an excuse to protect habitat, a goal for which few laws or procedures exist.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: The codification of economic and social reality. A bird is endangered only when its POPULATION is so small that efforts to save it will inconvenience too few people to affect election results.

ENDEMIC: Found only in a defined area. Yellow-billed Magpies are endemic to California, Black-capped Chickadees are endemic to NORTH AMERICA, Great Horned Owls are endemic to the Western Hemisphere, Peregrine Falcons are endemic to the whole world. Every living thing is endemic to some place.

ENGLISH NAME: The official English name of a bird, as distinguished from the SCIENTIFIC NAME or COMMON NAME. English names are chosen by the AOU in NORTH AMERICA and by similar organizations in other English-speaking nations. The inability of national organizations to agree on a standard set of English names is a persistent headache for ORNITHOLOGISTS and BIRDWATCHERS.

ENVIROCAPITALISM: Theory, demonstrably untrue but eagerly embraced by libertarians and businessmen, that the best protection for the environment is market forces.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS): Capricious assessment of the effect of development on a specific site. The reliability of an EIS is partly dependent on the support government has for the project and partly on whether an environmental group files suit to force an actual assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA): The federal government's 911 response team, an agency empowered to spend billions of dollars cleaning up environmental disasters that could have easily been avoided at a fraction of the cost. There is no equivalent agency responsible for anticipating and preventing such catastrophes.

ERGONOMIC: Engineering jargon for "It works." Adopted by BIRDWATCHERS to describe BINOCULARS that are easy to use and fit the hand well. The ready adoption of technical jargon from other disciplines is testimony to birdwatchers' desire to be taken seriously.

ERNE: Crossword puzzle bird. Depending on how much the originator knows about birds, variously a tern, EAGLE, gull, or SEABIRD.

ESCAPE: Designation given to any bird found so far from its expected range that it must have originated in a local zoo or propagator's pen, whether or not the species has ever been found in captivity. Escapes cannot be counted on lists. See ORIGIN UNCERTAIN.

ESCAPE DISTANCE: How far a bird will fly when startled or threatened. The belief, canonized as immutable BIRDING law, that the distance is inversely proportional to the observer's desire to see or identify the bird is erroneous.

ESKIMO CURLEW: Once ABUNDANT SHOREBIRD now possibly, but not certainly, EXTINCT, the Holy Grail, along with BACHMAN'S WARBLER and IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER, for LISTERS and BIRDERS.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR: The lengths to which you will go to see a life bird. See UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR.

ETHNO-ORNITHOLOGY: The study of older and primitive cultures in an effort to learn what they knew about birds, and, more specifically, which names were used for which species. This effort, undermined because these cultures were

unaware of, and thus unrestricted by, the concept of species, proves that any research, no matter how arcane, can be sanctified by insisting that it is a separate discipline.

EUROPEAN STARLING: The most successful and hated of the INTRODUCED SPECIES. Uttering its name is the closest that genteel BIRDWATCHERS come to profanity.

EVEREST ENDEAVOR: Research with no obvious application; thus, done because it is there.

EVOLUTION: The single most important fact we know about living organisms and a theory only semantically. Evolution is so complex that it is easily the most loosely used, misunderstood, misapplied, and frequently distorted word in the biological vocabulary. Not one person in a hundred thousand is sufficiently educated to use it except in its broadest sense.

EXCELLENT BIRDER: One who knows more than you do but never demonstrates it in front of other people.

EXCLUSIVE: A species that no one else has found on a CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT or other cooperative effort. Exclusives are highly prized and the territory with the greatest number is highly lauded. The desire for exclusives sometimes leads to excessive behavior, such as POACHING.

EXPANDING SPECIES: Any NATIVE bird whose POPULATION and range is undergoing dramatic expansion as a result of massive HABITAT ALTERATION by humans. This is viewed with great approval, no matter how devastating the effect on other species. Compare with INTRODUCED SPECIES.

EXPERIMENTAL: Legal designation given to newly established populations of ENDANGERED SPECIES, eliminating the protections they would otherwise be entitled to. The concession is necessary because without it, no state would agree, in view of the legal and financial obligations involved, to the establishment of an endangered species within its borders.

EXPERT: Derisive term, always put in quotes and sometimes modified with "so-called," used by the bullheadedly ignorant and uninformed when their views are challenged by anyone with greater knowledge or experience.

EXPERT BIRDER: 1) A BIRDER willing to identify birds too far away for anyone else to recognize, or to concur in the identification of closer birds after another member of the group has already named them. 2) One that knows more than you do and flaunts it. A show off. See EXCELLENT BIRDER.

EXTINCT: No longer with us. When a species is extinct, there are no individuals left, anywhere in the world. See EXTIRPATED.

EXTINCTION IS FOREVER!: Rallying cry of the PRESERVATIONISTS. Despite the importance and undeniability of the sentiment, it has not achieved the popularity or effect hoped for. Anti-environmentalists typically respond with "So what?"

EXTIRPATED: Gone, but only from one area. See EXTINCT. A species cannot be extinct in part of its range. The misuse of extinct to mean "not around here" has led to such bravura and nonsensical claims as "After an aggressive trapping program, starlings are extinct in my yard."

EXTRA PAIR FERTILIZATION (EPF): A common reproductive STRATEGY in many birds, scientific euphemism for "Dear, the reason the children look like the milkman is..."

EYAS: FALCONER'S term for a female Peregrine Falcon taken as a NESTLING. Enthusiastically and self-importantly borrowed by RAPTORPHILES and misused to refer to any female hawk. The obsessive borrowing of jargon from falconers is wisely ignored by most BIRDWATCHERS. See TIERCEL, HAGGARD.

EYEBROW: Contrasting line of color that passes above, not through, the eye of a bird. Nontechnical version of SUPERCILIUM. See EYELINE.

EYELINE: Contrasting line, usually dark, that appears to pass through, not above, the eye of a bird. Sometimes confused with EYEBROW. Eyebrows and eyelines are often useful in identification.

EYE RING: Contrasting circle of feathers around a bird's eye, typically much more obvious in FIELD GUIDE illustrations than in real birds. Although theoretically useful for identification in some species, BIRDWATCHERS rarely see them, even when they remember to look.

EXCREMENT: Delicate alternative to fecal matter, popular in some journals. But see GUANO.

FACULTATIVE MIGRANT: Said of a species that moves around in WINTER in an irregular manner, typically in response to environmental changes such as frozen water or a diminishing food supply. Code term for "unpredictable," the bane of science. Did not originate, as one might suppose, from the behavior of faculty members.

FAIR USE: Anti-environmentalism in a tuxedo.

FALCONER: Pseudo-environmentalist whose only passion for hawks is in owning one. Falconers are the main reason the nest locations of raptors, especially endangered ones, are kept secret.

FALCONRY: Archaic activity, dubiously labeled sport, indulged by those who love to own, tame, and dominate birds but whose only interest in wild birds is as potential prey.

FALCO PSEUDOGRINUS: Name given by Pete Dunne to the genetic goulash of Peregrine Falcons passed off as *Falco peregrinus anatum* and introduced into the eastern UNITED STATES birds from more than a dozen SUBSPECIES from around the world and used in the CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAM, thus bypassing the intent and probably the letter of the ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, but millions of dollars were raised.

FALL: For a BIRDWATCHER, the period between the sighting of the first southbound MIGRANT, usually a WARBLER, until the sighting of the last. Can last as little as two weeks depending on the region and the diligence of the observer.

FALLOUT: Describes the situation when large numbers of migrants appear in a small area simultaneously. Mythological ornithological phenomenon that always happens somewhere else.

FAMILY MONOGRAPH: A SPECIALTY GUIDE with glossy paper, less detail, and a much higher price.

FARMING: AGRIBUSINESS on an often inefficient, one-family scale. Although as or more destructive to habitat as other forms of AGRICULTURE, reflexively defended by environmentalists.

FECAL SAC: Huggies. Disposal diapers for birds.

FECUNDITY: The number of offspring an individual can produce. High fecundity rates are admired in birds and reviled in humans.

FEEDER CAM: A video camera aimed at a feeder and accessible through the Internet so that you can look at COMMON birds in someone else's yard. Proof that technology will be used if it is available, no matter how silly the application.

FEEDER WATCHER: Derogatory term used by BACKYARD BIRDERS for people who only watch the birds at their feeders and don't recognize all of them. See BIRD FEEDER.

FEEDING STATION: Describes situations in which more than one feeder is used. Obsessive feeders of birds erect as many as 20 feeders. Owners of single feeders who refer to their yard as a feeding station are the same people who give cute names to their houses.

FEEL GOOD ENVIRONMENTALISM: Any activity whose primary purpose is to bolster the self-esteem of the practitioner, regardless of its true environmental value. What the vast majority of environmentalists actually practice. See REHABILITATOR.

FERAL: Not, as you would assume, naturally wild; in ornithological terms, feral refers to birds that have escaped from captivity and refuse to come back on their own, or to birds that have escaped or been introduced and have been so ungrateful as to have established breeding populations on their own, outside of cages.

FERRUG: Common HAWKWATCHER and occasional BIRDWATCHER shorthand for Ferruginous Hawk. The second syllable rhymes with "huge."

FIELD: Any treeless habitat without interesting birds or one that has been too obviously altered by humans. See MEADOW.

FIELD ASSISTANT: Slave. The backbone of FIELD BIOLOGY, doing grueling, difficult work under terrible conditions in exchange for a STIPEND and, occasionally, the privilege of being a JUNIOR AUTHOR. Field assistants are usually students building a resume or kissing up to an advisor, or FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS and PROFESSIONAL BIRDWATCHERS eking out an existence. A few are running away from home, a bad marriage, or the law. Directors of field studies try diligently to weed those out. See FIELD TECHNICIAN.

FIELD BIOLOGY: A form of research, increasingly rare and sneered at, that involves actually going outdoors to look at birds. See MODELING.

FIELDCRAFT: Term used to describe the suite of characters that make an excellent field BIRDER, including knowledge, reliability, caution, persistence, humility, and the genius never to have misidentified a bird in public.

FIELD GUIDE: A book claiming to illustrate all the birds found in a particular area. Their origin is uncertain because no EXPERT will admit to using one, and most of the birds seen by beginners are not in field guides.

FIELD MARK: The way humans, but not necessarily birds, tell birds apart.

FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST: Someone who, without formal training or certification, recognizes himself as an EXPERT qualified to eke out a living conducting surveys and leading tours.

FIELD SKETCH: Many BIRDWATCHERS fill their very private notebooks with quick sketches of birds. Examination of field notebooks proves that birdwatchers, like most people, reach their artistic peak at the age of three.

FIELD TECHNICIAN: Indentured servant. A FIELD ASSISTANT with experience or a specialized skill such as banding or making spaghetti dinners for large, grumpy groups. The pay is sometimes slightly better and the reward is the title on the resume.

FIELD TRIP: Organized social activity similar to a wine and cheese party for literati. At the end of the party, an EXPERT provides a list of birds he has seen while you were talking.

FIRECREST: OLD WORLD species nearly identical to the Ruby-crowned Kinglet, the name used by BIRDWATCHERS who are confused or merely like it better. See GOLDCREST.

FIRST STATE RECORD: Not the first time a species occurs within the boundaries of a state, but the first time someone notices and reports it. Another instance of categorizing a bird by the behavior of the people who watch it.

FISH FARM: A magnet for fish-eating birds, an inevitability that did not occur to fish farmers until they had become heron and CORMORANT farmers. Their solution is to apply for permits to indiscriminately shoot fish-eating birds, which they define as any bird they can get within shotgun range of, despite the fact that shooting is far more time-consuming, expensive, and less effective than redesigning PONDS to make them inaccessible to birds. The only advantage is that it is more emotionally satisfying.

FISH HAWK: Old name, still fairly popular, for Osprey.

FISP: Banders code for Field Sparrow, occasionally used conversationally by BIRDERS. Rhymes with "lisp."

FIXED FOCUS BINOCULARS: Gimmick, cynically marketed to the uninitiated, that has no value as a BIRDWATCHING tool.

FL: Not Florida, but breeding bird Atlas code for Fledged Young. See NY.

FLAME: Nasty or critical response to an e-mail. On BIRDWATCHING LISTSERVS, sensitivities are so finely tuned that even a gentle disagreement or a question about a REPORT of a rare bird can be considered a flame.

FLAME WARS: A series of argumentative e-mail messages, usually increasing in unpleasantness and personal vituperation. Regular flame wars are waged over cats, COLLECTING, listing, and HUMMINGBIRD nectar. Regular subscribers to LISTSERVS sigh and delete when the subjects resurface.

FLAMMY: BIRDER shorthand for Flammulated Owl. See SCREECHIE.

FLEDGLING: A baby bird recently out of the nest but still under the protection and care of its parents. Occasionally misused to mean any baby bird.

FLICKER: BIRDER shorthand for a woodpecker of the genus *Colaptes*. If you bird in groups, you will eventually hear, in response to someone calling out "Flicker!", the automatic "You flick her, you saw her." Although meaningless, and not funny, it persists.

FLIGHT FEATHERS: Broad term for three sets of wing feathers, the primaries, secondaries, and tertials, that are central to a bird's ability to fly. Inclusive term popular with BIRDWATCHERS because few know which feather tract is which or have any inclination to learn.

FLIGHT NOTE: See CALL and CALL NOTE. Any short vocalization given by a bird while it is in flight.

FLIGHT PATTERN: HAWKWATCHER term for the distinctive shape of a flying hawk permitting identification by an experienced observer when no PLUMAGE is discernible or at great distances. See SPECK HAWK.

FLOATER: Unmated male bird wandering the edge of existing territories, always with an eye to replacing or displacing mated males. The second string.

FLOATING HOT SPOT: Slang for a boat full of BIRDERS on a PELAGIC TRIP because so many trips turn up rarities, the consequence of how little we know about the distribution and occurrence of SEABIRDS.

FLUDDLE: BIRDER slang for ephemeral puddles and low wet areas that appear after storms and when high water recedes. Such spots frequently attract birds.

FLYBY: A bird seen only briefly and on the wing. Cautious BIRDERS view flybys with some disappointment. Less cautious birders see them as opportunities.

FLYCATCHER: Highly efficient BIRD OF PREY denied that status because humans do not, when sober, go gunning for insects.

FLYING BARN DOOR: Common HAWKWATCHER cute for BALD EAGLE because the wings are so large and rectangular and the head and tail are often not obvious at first.

FLYING CARP: See SKY CARP.

FOLK NAME: Local and dialectical names for birds (see RAIN BIRD, e.g.). Many are nonsensical but are retained, and even revered, because of the common misconception that people who live "close to the earth" have some special insight into its secrets. The evidence to the contrary is overwhelming.

FOOD CHAIN: Who eats what, or, "How A Spider Ends Up in the Belly of a Falcon." Widely used to illustrate the relationship of all living things except humans, who cringe at the thought that much of what they eat is merely a biological storage bin for organisms they would rather die than allow to pass their lips.

FOOD PASS: The transfer of food from one hawk or owl to another, usually from a male to his mate. Drive-in window.

FOOTEDNESS: Term used by scientists to describe the tendency of some birds to preferentially use one foot when performing tasks such as holding food or for leading when walking. There is no evidence yet that it is significant but that does not reduce its appeal to researchers. See HANDEDNESS.

FORAGING: Food shopping.

FORAGING RATE: The speed at which a bird searches for and consumes food, considered scientifically interesting because it is assumed that birds are immune to phenomena such as an attack of the munchies.

FORAY: Three-day to one-week assaults by members of a state bird club on a rarely visited area, usually in SUMMER. The goal is to provide intense coverage and to shed light on breeding status. Began with the Brooks Bird Club under the

leadership of the legendary George Hall, whose one-county foray in West Virginia covered not just birds, but plants, mammals, reptiles, insects, and butterflies. Increasingly popular in other states.

FOREIGN RECOVERY: A bird caught by a BIRD BANDER that was banded somewhere else. Exceedingly rare, it is the high point of most bander's experience. That we can learn so much from the mere fact that the bird was recorded in two locations tells us less about the bird than about how little we know.

FORELEG: See TIBIOTARSUS.

FOREST CHIPPY: Somewhat arcane BIRDER cute for Worm-eating Warbler because the song is similar to that of Chipping Sparrow.

FOREST FAIRIES: Derogatory term used for environmentalists by those desperately suppressing their own sexual ambiguity.

FOREST FRAGMENTATION: The mistake developers made in leaving a few trees in the hope that they would provide positive WILDLIFE publicity. Environmentalists quickly identified the small patches as ecological disasters.

FOREST INTERIOR SPECIES: Birds we have concluded need extensive tracts of forest in which to breed and that shun edges. The newest and most powerful tool for the preservation of forests, resulting in a frantic rush to expand the lists of such species, with predictable consequences.

FORSTER'S TERN: The name is frequently mispronounced as "Foster's," as in the Australian lager. There are two "R"s and they are both sounded unless one has consumed large quantities of the lager, in which case all bets are off. A second common mispronunciation is "Forester's," as if the bird had taken up logging.

FOSTER PARENT: Subtly congratulatory term for the victim of BROOD PARASITISM, as if it were an act of generosity.

FOTE: Banders code for FORSTER'S TERN, occasionally used conversationally by BIRDERS. Rhymes with tote.

FOUR O'CLOCK EAGLE: Important HAWKWATCHER icon, the belief, just true enough to have achieved mythological status, that anyone leaving the watch early will miss the four o'clock eagle. A self-motivational ploy based on the unexplained truth that GOOD BIRDS often are seen late in the day.

FOUR-YEAR GULL: Gulls are divided by scientists, and grudgingly, BIRDERS, into groups based on the length of time it takes them to achieve adult PLUMAGE, the only age even marginally well covered in most FIELD GUIDES. The four-year gulls include most of the LARGE WHITE-HEADED GULLS and WHITE-WINGED GULLS and for most BIRDWATCHERS the term is as much a curse as a categorization. See THREE-YEAR GULL, TWO-YEAR GULL.

FOV: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Field of View, a characteristic of BINOCULARS. The FOV varies considerably and looking through cheap, high-powered binoculars is equivalent to peering through a long, half-inch pipe.

FREE FLYING: Said of a bird of dubious origin in the hope that the absence of restraints will cause a RECORDS COMMITTEE to view the occurrence as natural.

FREIRA: See GON-GON.

FRIGHT MOLT: When a bird is sufficiently terrified it can have feathers fall out, which it then has to replace by growing new ones (MOLT). The AVIAN equivalent of having one's hair turn white overnight except that in birds it actually happens.

FY: Breeding bird Atlas code for Food for Young. See NY.

G = GAUDY/GLOGER: Mnemonic device used to help remember an important biological concept, Gloger's Rule, which says that on average, individuals of a species are paler and less brightly colored the farther away from the Equator they breed. See B = BIGGER/BERGMANN.

GABBOON: An African word for slave, first used in North American by Frances Hamerstrom to refer to graduate students and volunteers who aided in various field studies. Carried proudly away by those so designated, it is now fairly common at hawkwatches and hawk banding stations to refer to volunteers, and slightly less charitably, hangers-on.

GADWALL: Oddly, this word is frequently mispronounced as "GAD-well," a form that was last acceptable at least 100 years ago.

GALE: The exception to the limitations imposed by WIND on BIRDWATCHING. Gales are ocean storms, of not quite HURRICANE strength, that blow some SEABIRDS within viewing distance of the coast, although trying to find and identify them while being buffeted by high winds and hard rain is exceedingly difficult, a factor which increases the number of gulls identified as SHEARWATERS and JAEGERS. See NOR'EASTER.

GALLINACEOUS: Relating to birds in the CHICKEN FAMILY, having nothing to do, to the amazement of many BIRDWATCHERS, with the COMMON GALLINULE.

GAME SPECIES: Birds which people legally shoot for fun and for which there is always adequate funding. See NONGAME SPECIES.

GANDER: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a male goose. See DRAKE.

GANG TICK: Brit for the phenomenon of hundreds or even thousands of TWITCHERS showing up at the same time to see a rare bird.

GASHAWK: Airplane. See MATTRESS THRASHER.

GBB (GONE BEFORE BINOCULARS): Describes a bird that flies between the time it is spotted and the binoculars are raised. The frequency with which this happens has elevated the experience to a "Rule" but is most often caused by the act of bringing the binoculars to bear, a frequently sudden move that can startle birds.

GBFF (GOOD BIRD FUDGE FACTOR): Mulligan. Privilege invoked when a particularly great bird almost qualifies under existing "rules" for some list, thus allowing it to be counted.

GBH: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Great Blue Heron. Pronounced "gee-bee-AITCH."

GENERALIST: A species whose particular habitat requirements we have not yet figured out.

GERBIL TUBE: Elevated glass walkways between buildings that provide humans with a front row seat to the AVIAN equivalent of the charge of the light brigade.

GESTALT: Term used by that strata of the BIRDWATCHING fraternity who find JIZZ low, common, or objectionable.

GLAUCASCOUS GULL: Surprisingly common, bizarre mispronunciation of Glaucous Gull, not deliberate. Reflects, perhaps, the tendency of people to put extra sounds into words and letter combinations they are unfamiliar with or don't feel compelled to look closely at. The extra syllable "ca" is pronounced "KAY" with a long "A" and "scous" pronounced as "shus" rhyming with "us."

GLOBAL WARMING: Incipient environmental disaster that is thought of by BIRDWATCHERS, if they think of it at all, as a mechanism by which southern birds may move north and be added to various lists.

GOATSUCKER: FOLK NAME for members of the family Caprimulgidae, including whip-poor-wills and nighthawks, based on the belief that they sucked the milk from the teats of goats and other farm animals. Another instructive example of folk wisdom. See RAIN BIRD.

GOBBLER: Hunter's name for Wild Turkey, frequently appropriated by BIRDWATCHERS and the general public.

GOBBLING GROUND: Non-technical term used by game bird biologists for the STRUTTING GROUND of prairie chickens. Has nothing to do with turkeys, despite previous entry.

GOING OVER THE HILL: Expression, deliberately misleading and optimistic, used by captains on days when the seas are very rough and the PELAGIC TRIP should probably not go. The captains, not wanting to return the fee, suggest going several miles OFFSHORE, the hidden purpose being to see how many people get sick. If the misery index is low enough, they go a little farther, the intention being to stay out long enough that even if forced to turn back, they get to keep the money.

GOLDCREST: OLD WORLD species nearly identical to the Golden-crowned Kinglet, the name sometimes used by BIRDWATCHERS here because they are confused or merely because they like it better. See FIRECREST.

GOLDILOCKS: Occasional BIRDWATCHER cute for American Goldfinch.

GONADS: In many male birds the gonads are shrunken and nonfunctional for most of the year, a condition some women wish existed in humans.

GON-GON: OLD WORLD name for some populations of the species known in NORTH AMERICA as SOFT-PLUMAGED PETREL. Other populations are treated in the Old World under the species name FREIRA.

GOOD BIRD: BIRDER shorthand for any bird worth going out of one's way to look for. The first question BIRDERS ask when meeting is, "Seen any good birds?", meaning locally rare or unexpected. The correct answer requires some knowledge of bird distribution and occurrence because what is a GOOD BIRD on one side of the country, or county, or parking lot, may be a TRASH BIRD on the other. It also depends on the experience of the observer because what is a trash bird for one person may be a LIFER for another.

GOOD GOD!: What the first settlers called the PILEATED WOODPECKER because the largest woodpecker in Europe would fit into the vest pocket of a Pileated, thus making it a symbol of the bounty of the new land.

GOODYEAR: To kill an animal with an automobile. Roads and highways are free-fire zones and no animal, regardless of its status, has any legal protection once it wanders onto one.

GOOSANDER: OLD WORLD name for Common Merganser, which for taxonomic and literary reasons should be adopted here, unless the two forms are SPLIT, which, given the TREND, seems possible.

GOPHER CHOKERS: Dismissive term for ANIMAL CONTROL officers, whose job it is to remove PEST SPECIES.

GRANNY BIRDER: Slightly derogatory term for an older, non-competitive, usually local BIRDWATCHER, most often, but not always, applied to women.

GRASSPIPER: BIRDER jargon for those SHOREBIRDS favoring short grass and plowed FIELDS in MIGRATION and WINTER. Usually refers to Upland, Buff-breasted, and Baird's Sandpipers but sometimes expanded to include any found, which at least at times, is all of them.

GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTALISM: Protracted and bitter local fights over the preservation of woodlots and puddles that serve to stiffen opposition to efforts to save significant habitat.

GRAY/GREY: In America the word is spelled with an "a," in Great Britain with an "e" but American BIRDWATCHERS sometimes get confused about the difference because bird names that originated in Great Britain retain the "e" spelling.

GRAY GHOST: A male Northern Harrier, named for its pale PLUMAGE and the frequency with which it is seen gliding silently over the MARSHES in the fine mist of first light. A classic example of the effort, nearly successful, to elevate cuteness into poetry.

GRAY STARLING: BIRDER slang for the Eurasian Collared-Dove because it is a (semi)INTRODUCED SPECIES that is spreading rapidly and threatens to become ABUNDANT. This usage, along with WHITE STARLING and GREAT WHITE STARLING, and other less established usages indicate how transcendent a symbol the EUROPEAN STARLING has become in the North American BIRDWATCHING culture.

GRAZING RIGHTS: Access to PUBLIC LANDS by cattlemen and ranchers at embarrassingly low prices, resulting in a huge financial windfall. It persists because conservatives, who benefit from the political support of the beneficiaries, have elevated a privilege into a right, a process they decry loudly as unconstitutional in cases such as health care.

GREAT EGRET: A bird whose name has been changed so many times that many beginning BIRDWATCHERS believe it is three species. Previously known as COMMON EGRET and AMERICAN EGRET and jocularly referred to at times as the Great Common American Egret.

GREATER LEGS: Common shorthand for Greater Yellowlegs. See LESSER LEGS.

GREAT GRAY SHRIKE: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Northern Shrike. Great Grey is older and Northern is inappropriate over most of the bird's range. See DIVER and other entries. [*Ed.: The two species are now split.*]

GREAT HORNY OWL: Predictable BIRDER attempt-to-be-cute name for Great Horned Owl.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Common Loon. See DIVER.

GREAT WHITE STARLING: BIRDWATCHER and WILDLIFE manager term for Mute Swan, an introduced, pestilential species.

GREEN-: Prefix denoting environment, environmentalist, or environmental activity. It is being stuck onto words at a dizzying rate. See various entries.

GREEN-COLLAR FRAUD: The widespread practice of trying to boost sales by claiming that a product is environmentally friendly when it is not. See BIODEGRADABLE.

GREEN CONSUMERISM: Buying products naively perceived to be environmentally friendly.

GREENHEAD: 1) MALLARD. See HUNTER'S NAMES. 2) In coastal areas, shorthand for the greenhead fly, a persistent, hard-biting, abundant pest.

GREENHOUSE EFFECT: Mechanism increasing GLOBAL WARMING. Most people, including BIRDWATCHERS, are familiar with the words but not the process and use the them interchangeably.

GREENIE: 1) Shorthand for any active environmentalist. Overused. 2) Occasional BIRDER shorthand for Green-winged Teal.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: New name for marshland, old-growth woodland, and other habitat that is or needs to be protected. Inspired by the belief that green infrastructure will be more politically palatable than habitat, which is probably true.

GREENLOCK: What happens when so many people visit a park that the RVs are stacked up for miles and there is no place to put them, thus turning the site into exactly what the visitors sought to escape. The ultimate goal of the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

GREEN PARTY: Political organization whose primary focus is environmental issues. Every country in Western Europe has Green Parties, and they sometimes elect candidates. There is no Green Party in the UNITED STATES despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that it has the most wide-ranging environmental laws of any industrialized country. [*Ed.: The Green Party of the United States (GPUS) was founded in 2001.*]

GREENSCAMMING: Anti-environmental organizations adopting ECO-friendly sounding names, such as The Peoples Committee to Save Everything and Promote Warm Feelings Toward Nature, to hide their true agenda, which typically involves the application of large amounts of concrete to habitat problems.

GREENTAPPING: An agreement by which an environmental group gets a tiny percentage of the profits from a credit card company or other business in return for promoting the product or service. Evidence that the environmental movement is approaching political maturity.

GREENWASH: Describes the effort of a business to improve its image by making a minuscule contribution to an environmental cause and then spending a fortune advertising the fact.

GREENWAY: Political sleight-of-hand by which habitat degradation in the form of roads and wide trails is rehabilitated by the retention or planting of (frequently non-native) trees or by limiting access to only official vehicles. As in all cases of HABITAT ALTERATION, scarce species become scarcer and COMMON ones more common and the primary beneficiaries are humans.

GREY PHALAROPE: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Red Phalarope. The Old World name is based on winter PLUMAGE, the NEW WORLD name on breeding plumage. See DIVER.

GREY PLOVER: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Black-bellied Plover. The Old World name is based on winter PLUMAGE, the NEW WORLD name on breeding plumage. See DIVER.

GRILLING: What a BIRDER or group of BIRDERS does to a rare or hard-to-identify bird, subjecting it to lengthy and detailed scrutiny. "We gave that juvie Curlew Sand quite a grilling."

GRIM GRIND: Slang term for a BIG DAY, going back to at least the 1950s and the days of the CENTURY RUN. See LETHAL TOUR.

GRIP OFF: British BIRDER slang for unattractive verbal competitiveness about birds. "Every time I mention a good bird, he grips me off with a better one." Regular practitioners are avoided.

GU-11 (GU-ELEVEN): Derisive HAWKWATCHER term for any gull, loosely borrowed from military jargon. Hawkwatchers do not like gulls because they occasionally soar like hawks and are thus momentarily confusing and distract attention from real birds.

GUANO: EXCREMENT with economic value, especially the large deposits found around long-established SEABIRD colonies.

GUERRILLA BIRDING: Embarrassingly self-important synonym for RUN-AND-GUN BIRDING used by those who cannot stand the idea of being thought of as mere BIRDWATCHERS.

GUESTIMATE: Semi-scientific number, less precise than an estimate but better than a SWAG. Which of the three is appropriate depends less on the data than on the confidence of the estimator, as modified by policy considerations.

GUILLEMOT: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Common Murre. In NORTH AMERICA, the name also causes confusion with Black Guillemot and Pigeon Guillemot. See DIVER. [*Ed.: The current Old World name is Common Guillemot.*]

GUNSTOCK: A cut-down rifle stock that is modified so a TELESCOPE can be mounted on it, making it easier to carry and requiring the use of your companions as tripods.

GYPPY NIGHTJAR: British BIRDER slang for Egyptian Nightjar.

GYRFALCON: THE BIRD OF PREY, the biggest, fastest, most spectacular killing machine in the AVIAN world. Loved not just for its hunting prowess, but also because it is a far northern species rarely seen where most BIRDWATCHERS go. A REPORT of a nearby Gyrfalcon will turn even the most misanthropic BIRDWATCHER into a CHASER.

HABITAT: Most birds are habitat-specific, typically occurring only where their food, cover, and behavioral needs are met. For most BIRDWATCHERS, who

know little about these requirements, a bird's habitat is where they happen to see it.

HABITAT ALTERATION: Screwing up the landscape so much that species disappear and new ones come in. See HABITAT MODIFICATION.

HABITAT MODIFICATION: Screwing up the landscape enough so that populations rise or decline and a few new birds move in. The distinction between HABITAT ALTERATION and habitat modification depends on the agenda of the person making the call.

HAGGARD: FALCONRY term for an adult Peregrine Falcon taken from the wild, occasionally misused by RAPTORPHILES to refer to any wild bird. See EYAS, TIERCEL.

HANDEDNESS: Term used by parrot fanciers and breeders for the tendency of some individuals to preferentially use one foot when performing tasks such as manipulating food. The term was created to emphasize a distinction from FOOTEDNESS in other birds both because parrots show more dexterity and because parrot owners believe the birds are more human and thus superior to other species.

HARRIER: See MARSH HAWK.

HATCHLING: Commonly misused as a synonym for NESTLING, thus obliterating a useful distinction in which hatchling referred to birds recently out of the egg.

HAWAII: While acknowledged that it is technically a UNITED STATES state, not viewed as such by most BIRDERS, especially LISTERS, under the argument that it is not ecologically related to NORTH AMERICA. The real reason is that it is too expensive to visit regularly and has so many introduced birds that it is an OPEN-AIR ZOO and no one can face the endless arguments about what is countable.

HAWKBAIT: Derogatory name given to TRASH BIRDS used as lures to attract and capture hawks. Demeaning the birds used in this manner is necessary because the job is often fatal.

HAWK MOUNTAIN: The Holy City of HAWKWATCHERS. Not the best, but the oldest and most famous hawkwatching site in the world, the place it all began. Every hawkwatcher and serious BIRDWATCHER feels compelled to make the pilgrimage at least once. Not coincidentally, the best endowed, most successfully promoted site in the hawkwatching pantheon.

HAWKOREAGLE!: Expression used by highly excitable types at a few hawk watches whenever a new bird is spotted in the distance. Being trapped on a mountain top with someone who yells it every single time a speck appears on the horizon has made many HAWKWATCHERS consider the benefits of immediate population reduction.

HAWKWATCHER: A subspecies of BIRDER who counts hawks and believes other birds don't count.

HAZEL BAZEMORE PARK: Small park on the Texas coast that has become the most productive FALL hawk watch in NORTH AMERICA, with nearly 1,000,000 birds a year. Among HAWKWATCHERS and experienced BIRDERS often called just Hazel or just Bazemore.

HEADER: The title put on e-mail messages, intended to serve as a warning that makes it possible to delete many unread. On a maddening number of messages, the header is unrelated to the content of the message.

HEAD SCRATCHING: Like yawning, auto-suggestive because the way birds do it makes scientists do it. The result of an earlier, slightly tarnished theory that the way birds scratched (over or under the wing) had evolutionary significance.

HEAD SHAKE: In some species of DUCKS a ritualized display that, rather than being a rejection, is a come-on.

HEAT SHIMMER: Optical distortion caused by heat radiating upward from a surface such as a MUDFLAT or LAKE. Heat shimmer can occur at any time of the year and alters the perceived shape, size, and color of birds, especially those seen through a TELESCOPE because magnification exacerbates the effect. BIRDWATCHERS insufficiently aware of the problem are sometimes deluded into turning COMMON birds into similar but rarer ones by it.

HEERMANN'S GULL: A HOODED GULL that has a white head but is sufficiently distinctive that BIRDWATCHERS forgive the anomaly, to the extent that they are even aware of it.

HEGU: Banders code for Herring Gull, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced "HEY-goo." On the West Coast, sometimes causes confusion with Heermann's Gull.

HEIBS: BIRDER acronym for Herons, Egrets, Ibises, Bitterns, and Storks, a disparate collection often found feeding together. Although useful, and even appearing in print occasionally, it has not become common because the pronunciation, with a long "E," sounds like a religiously insensitive slur.

HELL-DIVER: Same as DABCHICK.

HELPER: Samaritan with an agenda. Unmated bird that assists a pair in raising the young, usually with an eye to replacing or supplanting one of the adults.

HEN: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a female DUCK. See DRAKE.

HEN HARRIER: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Northern Harrier. Neither name is inspired. See DIVER and other entries. [*Ed.: The two species are now split.*]

HERPS: From herpetology, shorthand for reptiles and amphibians. On slow days some BIRDWATCHERS amuse themselves by going herping, an expression which the uninitiated sometimes misinterpret.

HETH: Banders code for Hermit Thrush, occasionally used in conversation by BIRDERS. Pronounced as it looks, with a short "e."

HIDE: British for what in America is called a blind.

HIGH HOLE: FOLK NAME for FLICKER, occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS, although almost no one understands what is meant.

HOARDING: Saving for a rainy day. Some species stockpile food for lean times. Humans, who rarely indulge in the practice, reflexively provide a label suggesting that the behavior is somehow unattractive.

HOFI: Bander's code for House Finch, fairly common in conversational use by BIRDERS. Pronounced with a long "O" and the I as a long "E."

HOLBOELL'S GREBE: Old name for Red-necked Grebe, still used on occasion by BIRDWATCHERS who refuse to own a FIELD GUIDE published after 1960.

HOLSTEIN CROW: Occasional BIRDER slang for Black-billed Magpie because the black-and-white PLUMAGE is marginally reminiscent of the cow and because the birds favor pastures.

HOME: Bander's code for Hooded Merganser, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced as it looks. The code for Common Merganser is COME, which is never used conversationally, for obvious reasons.

HOME RANGE: The area over which a bird moves once it has settled in for an extended stay, either in SUMMER or WINTER. The home range, which is not defended, typically contains the bird's TERRITORY, which is.

HOMING: The natural tendency for a bird that has been captured and trucked to some distant location to return home, an endless source of amazement and amusement for humans.

HOODED GULL: Generally smaller gulls that have dark hoods in breeding season; better liked, to the extent that any BIRDWATCHER likes gulls, than LARGE WHITE-HEADED GULLS because the identification is almost straightforward.

HOODIE: Common BIRDER shorthand for Hooded Merganser.

HORN: The universal color, employed whenever the observer is not certain what color they are seeing or cannot think of the right word. Usually, but not always, limited to grays, off-whites, browns, blacks, and flesh colors, variously tinged yellow, pink, blue, or even green. Seeing the word used in the description of a bird often causes experienced BIRDERS to laugh.

HOSP: Banders code for House Sparrow, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced as in "hospital."

HOST SPECIES: Victim. A bird suffering the consequences of BROOD PARASITISM. Unlike humans, bird hosts never throw the party deliberately.

HOTLINE: Thirty minutes of recorded directions, spoken too quickly to be written down, to a bird that left four days earlier. Long distance.

HOTSPOT: Any location with a sufficient number of BIRDERS.

HOUSE WREN: See BARN OWL.

HUD GOD: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Hudsonian Godwit, a little less obvious than most because both names are truncated.

HUDSONIAN CURLEW: Previous name for Whimbrel, still used by some BIRDWATCHERS with older FIELD GUIDES.

HUMMER: Universal BIRDER shorthand for HUMMINGBIRD, so common that the longer form is rarely heard except from beginners.

HUMMINGBIRD: Any of a large number of small, colorful species admired by conservatives for their unique ability to fly backwards. Frequently mistaken for insects by nonbirders; BIRDWATCHERS tend to reverse the error.

HUNTER'S NAMES: Hunters use colloquial names for many of their AVIAN victims, such as BALDPATE, BLUEBILL, BUTTERBALL, and GREENHEAD. Some hunters use them by custom but many use them because they have not bothered to learn the real names of the species they shoot. Some BIRDERS have adopted the jargon because they think it makes them sound knowledgeable.

HURRICANE: Destructive tropical storm that causes a powerful surge of hope in BIRDERS and LISTERS because it scoops up southern SEABIRDS and deposits them hundreds of miles inland. In every community cowering in the path of a hurricane, there are one or two people silently pleading "Come on baby, right here, come to me..."

HY: Hatching Year. Bander's code. See AHY.

HYBRID: Irritating result of birds we have designated as separate species continuing to mate with each other. The occasional result of hybridization between species not closely related or known to hybridize results in highly imaginative and entertaining identifications.

HYPOTHETICAL: An out-of-range or rare bird well seen and described but successfully discredited by those who wanted to see it and didn't.

ICELANDIC GULL: Perplexingly persistent and inexplicable error used by many BIRDWATCHERS when referring to Iceland Gull. That those who own FIELD GUIDES and other books and have read about the species continue the mistake suggests that information, once acquired and hard-wired into human memory, is nearly impossible to dislodge. See CANADIAN GOOSE.

ICTERID: Member of the blackbird family. See PARULID.

ID: BIRDER shorthand for identification, so pervasive that the longer version is rarely encountered outside formal writing.

-IDAE: Suffix denoting family, as in Picidae, the woodpecker family. In part because BIRDWATCHERS are focused on species and not groupings, in part because Latin is not taught anywhere now, and in part because people are leery of embarrassing themselves with mispronunciations (but see JACANA), birdwatchers rarely use scientific family names. The correct pronunciation is two syllables, short "i" as in "it" and long "E" as in "dee." See -INAE.

IMAGE FIGHTING: Technical term for birds attacking their own reflections in mirrors, windows, car hubcaps, and other polished surfaces. Although common, and easily prevented, it appears to have great amusement potential for humans.

IMBD (INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY): The NAMC on a world-wide basis, minimally successful because most areas do not have many BIRDWATCHERS and because May is not ideal in all parts of the world.

IMMATURE: In birds, youthful but not irritating.

IMMIE/IMMY: BIRDER shorthand for IMMATURE, as in, "I saw an immie BLUE GROS this morning." See JUVIE.

IMMIGRATION: Describes the unsurprising pattern of excess birds moving from areas with high populations to new or underutilized areas. AVIAN immigration is viewed as positive and is without controversy.

IMPOUNDMENT: Diked area constructed in a MARSH to enhance WATERFOWL HABITAT at the expense of other marsh birds. Massive destruction of a habitat otherwise rigorously protected is permitted because waterfowl are GAME SPECIES. The habitat degradation is ignored by BIRDERS because impoundments typically have easy access and concentrate large numbers of some birds.

IMPRINTING: Party trick to make birds act like humans.

-INAE: Suffix denoting subfamily, as in Cardinalinae, the cardinal subfamily. Rarely used by BIRDWATCHERS for the same reasons that -IDAE is not, with the added complications that few know what a subfamily is and taxonomists keep changing the names of groupings. The pronunciation is two syllables, short "i" as in "it" and long "E" as in "knee."

INBREEDING: MATING within a small, closely-related group, typically with unfortunate results. Confined to some animals, the European monarchy, and a few rural areas of NORTH AMERICA.

INCREMENTALISM: Reflexive charge hurled by anti-environmentalists at any proposal to preserve, mitigate, or clean up anything. It is based on a big lie: Let them save even one ENDANGERED SPECIES and they will use it to further their hidden agenda, which is having us all living in caves again. It ignores the reality that most supporters of environmental legislation are NIMBYS, deeply attached to their own creature comforts. Besides, caves are one of the places they want to keep people out of.

INDICATOR SPECIES: Bird designated as the typical representative of a specific HABITAT and monitored as a measure of the habitat's health. The assessment depends on whether the bird is one of the first or last to disappear as a result of habitat degradation.

INDIGNANT BUNNY: Common BIRDER lingo for Indigo Bunting because the mispronunciation is obvious and because to some ears the song sounds like a litany of complaints.

INDIVIDUAL DISTANCE: Personal space. How close a bird will permit you to approach before flushing. With numerous exceptions, the smaller the bird the closer you can get, which is incalculably convenient for BIRDWATCHERS.

INFESTATION: Describes the periodic and natural phenomenon of large numbers of a species appearing in a small area so as to discomfit, irritate, or confuse humans.

INFORMATION CENTER: Theory, popular with some scientists and pooh-poohed by others, that communal ROOSTS and breeding colonies serve as the equivalent of the office water cooler, where news about prime feeding areas is exchanged.

INSECTICIDE: Front-line weapon in the war on insects, much hated by BIRDWATCHERS. See INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT.

INSECT REPELLENT: The third most important item in the BIRDER's kit bag. There are more quirky ideas and more misinformation about folk remedies than there are about Elvis. Nearly 50 years' worth of exhaustive testing by the military has shown that only two chemicals work, DEET and PERMETHRIN. All others do not, no matter how passionately their champions defend them. See CHIGGER.

INSHORE TROPICBIRD: Pelagic BIRDER slang for Royal Tern because of the superficial similarity and because the terns are COMMON close to shore and the tropicbirds, rare and highly prized, are typically found farther out.

INSTANT FOCUS BINOCULARS: Mass-market optic that can be brought almost into focus in less than a second, but which no power on earth can bring into precise focus.

INSTINCT: In animals, any fixed, predictable, and repetitive action or response; in humans, a justification for socially unacceptable behavior such as violence, infidelity, and calling talk radio shows.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT: Multi-pronged approach to killing insects that does not depend entirely on pesticides and is thus viewed as being more environmentally sensitive. We have been waging all-out war on insects for more than 100 years and war breeds its own jargon designed to gloss over the consequences of the action. This particular piece of double-speak obscures the fact that we are trying to eliminate the base of the FOOD CHAIN and is popular because many environmentalists believe that a bird would rather starve to death than be poisoned.

INTENTION MOVEMENT: Any movement a bird makes immediately prior to any recognizable behavior, such as eating or flying. Some defined intention movements are the result of the observer spending too much time in the field alone.

INTERMEDIATE BIRDER: One that knows almost as much as you do. See EXPERT BIRDER.

INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE: The most frequently damned symbol of the excess of consumption, despite the fact that BIRDWATCHERS spend more time on the road than anyone except salesmen and truck drivers.

INTRODUCED SPECIES: A bird that prospers after having been transported by humans to an area it would have otherwise never reached, and thus vilified by humans and not given the protection offered NATIVE birds.

INVASION: An IRRUPTION that exceeded our predictions.

IRIDESCENCE: In a few species, a quality that makes feathers change colors as the light shifts. For beginners, all species are iridescent.

IRRUPTION: Obfuscating term invoked when large numbers of birds show up where we did not expect them.

-ISH: Suffix attach to all colors used to describe birds, a fudge factor protecting ORNITHOLOGISTS, FIELD GUIDE authors, and other writers from the risk of specificity or accountability.

ISOLATING MECHANISM: MATING behavior that prevents bad marriages by reducing the number of instances in which birds designated as separate species breed with each other.

IVORY-BILLED RAIL: BIRDER nickname for American Coot, for the contrasting white facial shield, the reminder that coots are members of the rail family, and as a nod to IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER, the most magical of the probably EXTINCT species.

IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER: Probably EXTINCT species. See ESKIMO CURLEW.

IWHSIIIHKIWT (I WOULDN'T HAVE SEEN IT IF I HADN'T KNOWN IT WAS THERE): BIRDING phenomenon in which an observer sees and counts a bird reported at a specific site despite the fact that it would have been otherwise unrecognized, has already left, or was never there.

JACANA: Large tropical SHOREBIRD occasionally found in south Texas. Americans, being the least bilingual people on earth, use dozens of pronunciations, sometimes in the same sentence.

JAEGER: A group of piratical SEABIRDS. See SKUA.

JDLR (JUST DIDN'T LOOK RIGHT): 1) Excuse when a COMMON bird is initially misidentified as something rare, as in, "My first thought was Song Sparrow but it JDLR." 2) A deliberately modest disclaimer when one member of a group picks out an extremely difficult to identify bird, as in, "My first thought was Semi Sand too, but somehow it JDLR."

JET SKI: The latest toy of the waterborne set, the growth in use has been explosive and largely unregulated. Despite evidence that they are seriously detrimental to nesting waterbirds, and hundreds of instances in which users deliberately run them through nesting colonies and protected areas, the resistance to any regulation is rabid. The most effective, and idiotic, argument is that regulation would inconvenience too many people and that it should have been implemented when the use was rare.

JET STREAM: High elevation current that serves as a steering mechanism for a WEATHER pattern such as a COLD FRONT, thus making BIRDWATCHERS second only to airline pilots in their interest in and understanding of the phenomenon.

JETTY DUCKS: Common BIRDER term for the rarer SEADUCKS, Harlequin and EIDERS, especially south of the normal range, where rocky coasts are rare and the birds tend to congregate at jetties. Although they may well be found in other areas, especially those with shellfish, almost all reports are from jetties because there is usually easy access, and at many, it is often possible to bird without getting out of the car.

JIZZ: The indefinable quality of a bird that makes it possible to identify it after a quick glance and without seeing specific FIELD MARKS. While all birds have their own distinctive JIZZ, its usefulness increases proportionately with the observer's experience. Thought to be an acronym of "General Impression, Size, and Shape." See GESTALT.

JOLLY ROGER: FOLK NAME for a frigatebird, adopted by some BIRDWATCHERS. See MAN-O-WAR.

JUNIOR AUTHOR: Scientific articles often have multiple authors, but only the first listed, or SENIOR AUTHOR, is remembered, as in "Jones' seminal work on..." Junior authors are all the others, usually FIELD ASSISTANTS, laboratory drones, computer specialists, girlfriends, and others in thrall to the senior author. No one except immediate family knows the names of junior authors.

JUVENILE: In birds, used to describe a PLUMAGE, rather than a behavior, that is not yet adult.

JUVENILE/JUVENAL: Noun/adjective or vice versa. The first full PLUMAGE of a bird's life, or related to it. ORNITHOLOGISTS/BIRDWATCHERS cannot agree on which word to use, or, if both are used, which is the noun and which is the adjective. The problem was created when juvenal was thrown into the mix by those who mistakenly think juvenile cannot be both a noun and an adjective.

JUVIE: BIRDER shorthand for juvenile, as in "I saw a juvie Dunlin at the beach." Theoretically distinguished from IMMIE because it refers to a specific PLUMAGE while immie merely means anything less than adult, but so many BIRDWATCHERS fail to make, or do not understand, the distinction, that the terms are usually used interchangeably, making it difficult to know when juvie is being used correctly or precisely.

KATFISH KOPS: Unflattering name for USF&WS and DNR employees because of the sometimes-justified belief that they are primarily interested in GAME SPECIES. Also known as RABBIT SHERIFFS.

KENTISH PLOVER: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Snowy Plover. Kentish is older but is inappropriate for the same reasons that CONNECTICUT WARBLER is. See DIVER and other entries. [*Ed.: The two species are now split.*]

KENTUCKY WARBLER: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

KEY WEST QUAIL-DOVE: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

KICKER CALL: Perhaps the most controversial bird vocalization in the history of ornithology/BIRDWATCHING. Rendered variously as hip-hip-hoorah, and tick-tick-mcgreer. See ORNITHOLOGICAL MYSTERY SONG.

KLEPTOPARASITISM: Describes the situation in which one bird steals food from another rather than hunting it. Exception to the no-free-lunch rule.

KNEE-JERK ENVIRONMENTALIST: Popular slander by right-wingers for anyone who supports any environmental law or policy that results in any limitation on human activity. See SO-CALLED ENVIRONMENTALIST.

KNOT: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Red Knot. See SWALLOW.

LABORED FLIGHT: Description based on the perception by humans, who cannot fly at all, that for some birds it is hard work. Because of the high energy costs of flight, it is hard work for all birds, no matter how easy it looks to us.

LAGU: Banders code for Laughing Gull, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. pronounced "Lay-Goo."

LAKE: A body of water large enough that it requires a TELESCOPE to identify the birds on it. See POND.

LAKE CHICKEN: BIRDER shorthand for any of the ABUNDANT local gulls, especially Ring-billed.

LANCY: British BIRDER slang for Lanceolated Warbler.

LANDFILL: A government-funded FEEDING STATION for gulls.

LAND USE: Euphemism for HABITAT destruction. Debates over land use are disagreements concerning how humans will use the land, WILDLIFE having already been dismissed from the table.

LAPLAND BUNTING: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Lapland Longspur. Bunting is older but longspur is hard to beat as a well-chosen bird name. See DIVER and other entries.

LARDER: Anthropomorphic term for the site where some birds store food, usually prey, for latter consumption.

LARGE *ACCIPITER* SP.: Designation found on TRIP LISTS, BIG DAY reports, CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT tallies, and other census efforts to suggest that the

Cooper's Hawk seen briefly might have been a NORTHERN GOSHAWK, many times more desirable in most places. See SP. and SMALL *ACCIPITER* SP.

LARGE FALCON SP.: Designation suggesting the Merlin may have been a Peregrine Falcon or the Peregrine a GYRFALCON, an exceptional bird almost anywhere. See LARGE ACCIPITER SP., MEDIUM FALCON SP., and SP.

LARGE RAIL SP.: Common entry on DAY LISTS and other counts, necessitated by most BIRDWATCHER's ignorance of rails (see MARSH HEN, CLING RAIL). Conversely, those who never use this particular waffle certainly need to.

LARGE WHITE-HEADED GULL: All that most BIRDWATCHERS need to hear to make them turn and run for the car. The large white-headed gull COMPLEX, which includes Herring Gull and its closest relatives, is a taxonomic and identification quagmire that inspires publication wars among scientists and despair in BIRDERS.

LATIN NAME: Synonym for SCIENTIFIC NAME, slightly misleading because many scientific names have Greek roots and many are "Latinized" versions of native words and individual's names.

LAWN PLOVER: Killdeer, but also used by many BIRDWATCHERS for AMERICAN ROBIN.

LA WATER: Not something undrinkable, but fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Louisiana Waterthrush. See LOUSY WATERTHRUSH.

LAWRENCE'S WARBLER: Extremely rare, recessive HYBRID between Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers. Its rarity makes it attractive to BIRDWATCHERS, who consider it a GOOD BIRD despite the fact that it is a hybrid and fails the COUNTABILITY test. See BREWSTER'S WARBLER.

LBJ: Little Brown Jobs. Derogatory term for SPARROWS, used by those who wish to imply that they could identify them but can't be bothered.

LEAPFROG MIGRATION: In some species, such as Red-tailed Hawk, northern birds move south in the WINTER, "leap-frogging" resident populations because most prime HABITAT is already occupied. The situation is complicated by the movements of young of the year within and out of the resident range and because most BIRDWATCHERS do not recognize changes in local populations as long as they see at least one or two of the birds on a regular basis.

LEGS: BIRDER jargon for Greater and/or Lesser Yellowlegs, as in, "I had a legs at the pond but I couldn't tell which kind." See GREATER LEGS, LESSER LEGS.

LEK: AVIAN gathering place where males come to strut their stuff and females to examine the merchandise; a singles bar for birds.

LENGTH: Unreliable measurement given in FIELD GUIDES and some other books, useful only as a general comparative such as concluding that hawks are bigger than SPARROWS. Most lengths are calculated by measuring specimens in museums, from tip of BILL to tip of tail with the bird stretched flat on its back, a posture rarely seen in the field.

LESSER LEGS: Common shorthand for Lesser Yellowlegs. See GREATER LEGS.

LETHAL TOUR: Another term for a CENTURY RUN. See BIG DAY and GRIM GRIND.

LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE: From statistics, a measure of the extent to which the researcher believes his own results.

LIFE EXPECTANCY: Scientifically calculated odds, using minimal and anecdotal data and statistical craftiness, on how long a bird is expected to live in the wild under normal conditions. See LONGEVITY.

LIFE HISTORY: Everything we know about a species put into a single account. Even with intensely studied species, everything we know is so little that the life history is equivalent to a one-page biography of George Washington.

LIFELESS LIST: The final list, the creation of obsessive LISTERS who are unable to think of any new categories; the listing of species found dead, usually as ROADKILL. Speeding up in an attempt to expand the list is considered unsporting. See DOR.

LIFE LIST: List of all the birds an observer has seen. Life lists, like the books of money-laundering operations, come in two versions. The public list includes all the birds you are willing to admit you have seen. The private list includes all the birds you know you have seen, and is much longer.

LIFER: Any bird you have not seen. Lifers, no matter how COMMON, are more valuable than any bird you have already seen, no matter how rare.

LIMIT OF CONJECTURE: Distance at which an object may be, with some confidence, recognized as a bird, but so far away that identification is impossible, permitting lengthy speculation about what it might have been without the danger of correction.

LIMPKIN: Species confined to Florida whose distinctive, eerie CALL has been added, for the amusement of BIRDWATCHERS, to most jungle movies set in Africa.

LINEAR GRASSLAND: Euphemism for the narrow strips of mowed and sprayed ground too close to roads, buildings, STREAMS, and other inconveniences to build or plant on. In many areas, this is virtually the only HABITAT left for grassland species.

LISTERS: BIRDERS who know precisely how many birds they have seen in every conceivable geographic area and for whom birds already seen are irrelevant and birds not yet seen are of paramount importance. See NONLISTERS.

LIST FRIENDLY: Describes any area in which a BIRDER can see a large number of species in a short time, thus maximizing effort.

LISTSERV: An e-mail discussion group in which every random, irrelevant thought of every participant is automatically dumped onto your computer. One out of fifty messages contains useful information.

LITTLE AUK: OLD WORLD name for what in NORTH AMERICA is called Dovekie, another example of our inability to standardize ENGLISH NAMES because of cultural and jingoistic considerations.

LITTLE FEATHERED PEOPLE: What BIRD LOVERS and some FEEDER WATCHERS think birds are, to the frustration of many BIRDWATCHERS and the horror of ORNITHOLOGISTS.

LOCAL: Catchall term for a bird whose distribution is poorly known or so irregular that it confuses us.

LOCAL PATCH: British BIRDWATCHING jargon for a nearby site, frequently and systematically visited and surveyed. "Birding one's local patch" teeters between being an institution and an obsession there. See PURPLE PATCH.

LOG COCK: FOLK NAME for PILEATED WOODPECKER, rarely used by BIRDWATCHERS for reasons of delicacy. The name originated because of the species propensity for feeding on fallen trees.

LONGEVITY: How long a bird can live in captivity, protected and pampered. Has no relationship to LIFE EXPECTANCY. See LONGEVITY RECORD.

LONGEVITY RECORD: Common sense says that this is the oldest age achieved by a bird in captivity. It is not. It is the oldest age achieved by a bird in the wild. Longevity records are based entirely on the reappearance of banded birds, a statistically minute occurrence. As a result, longevity records are broken at dizzying rates and are, at best, only inconsequential benchmarks.

LONG-RANGE BOMBING: Popular sport among serious BIRDERS using high-powered optics and looking at distant, barely discernible birds (see LIMIT OF CONJECTURE), usually while dealing with HEAT SHIMMER, backlighting, and other optical distortions. The game is to put names on impossible birds using JIZZ and speculation. On those rare occasions when the bird comes close enough to establish the identification, great honor is conferred on the one who named it. On the much more frequent occasions when the identification is shown to be in error, or even laughable, no discredit is attached to the observer because it was clearly impossible in the first place.

LONG-TAILED DUCK: Current name for OLDSQUAW. The AOU changed the name both because Long-tailed Duck is older and thus has precedence and because Oldsquaw offended some Native Americans. The resulting debate, mostly on the Internet, quickly achieved a level of hysteria typically found only on talk radio and consisted almost entirely of invective, babbling, and undirected rage. For many non-participants, it was one of the most entertaining sideshows in recent memory. In ten years, only the mentally deranged will remember or care.

LONG-TAILED TIT: European species. see BEARDED TIT.

LOOMERY: Lovely OLD WORLD name for a GUILLEMOT colony.

LOON: See DIVER.

LORE: In BIRDWATCHING, neither fact nor mythology raised to the level of truth, but the small area between a bird's BILL and its eye. In some cases, color and pattern of the lores aid in identification.

LOUSY HERON: Moderately common, pretentious BIRDER shorthand for Louisiana Heron, confusing to many because the currently correct name is Tricolored Heron.

LOUSY WATERTHRUSH: Pretentious BIRDER shorthand for Louisiana Waterthrush. See LA WATER.

LOW DISPERSION (LD) GLASS: Non-perceptible improvement that allows optical manufacturers to increase prices by 100%, proof that the BIRDING economy has grown large enough to become part of the free enterprise system.

LOWER FORTY-EIGHT LIST: All the birds seen by an individual in NORTH AMERICA, excluding Canada and Alaska. The Triple A league of listing, created for those lacking the resources for annual trips to ATTU.

LOVEBIRD: Name given to any captive-bred bird if the retailer thinks it will increase sales.

LRGV (LOWER RIO GRAND VALLEY). The poor BIRDER's ATTU, home of the largest collection of VAGRANTS and specialty birds in NORTH AMERICA outside of Alaska. It has become such a popular destination that it is frequently identified only by its initials.

LSU MAFIA: Insider BIRDER and ornithological name for the professors, graduates, and students of the ornithology school at Louisiana State University. It reflects the school's pre-eminence, the rapid growth of its influence in academic circles and scientific organizations, and, in the face of changing cultural norms, the unabashed enthusiasm for going out in the field with shotguns to secure specimens.

LUMP: Phenomenon by which the AOU automatically takes any bird you have just seen and merges it into a bird you saw years ago. See SPLIT.

LURKER: 1) Common HUMMINGBIRD devotee slang for a bird that is not visiting a feeder. The word emerged because on most counts and surveys, 10 to 100 times as many hummingbirds are recorded at feeders for every one seen elsewhere, a consequence of the difficulty in finding so small and mobile a bird. Working under the probably reasonable assumption that there must be many birds not visiting feeders, these unseen and unrecorded birds were named lurkers. 2) Someone who is signed up for an Internet discussion group and reads all the messages but never participates. Evolved from meaning one, or vice versa.

MAGGIE: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Magnolia Warbler.

MAGPIE: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Black-billed Magpie. Recent evidence suggests that this widely distributed bird may involve several species. See SWALLOW. [*Ed.: The two species are now split.*]

MAKING A RUN: Said by BIRDERS who hesitate to call themselves CHASERS, as in, "I'm thinking about making a run for the Gyrfalcon..." Implies a slightly less obsessive reaction.

MALLARD: Technical term for any brown DUCK not seen swimming next to a male duck.

MANDIBLE: Technical name for the lower half of a bird's BILL. See UPPER MANDIBLE.

MAN-O-WAR: Old name, still fairly popular, for a frigatebird.

MANTLE: Imprecise term for the upperparts of a bird minus the head and tail. On a sitting bird, it usually refers to the back and sides. On a flying bird, it can mean the back, the back and inner wings, or the back and the whole wings, depending on the user. The use is arbitrarily limited to large birds, especially gulls, and no one ever talks about the mantle color of a WARBLER.

MANUAL: A SPECIALTY GUIDE without the pictures, the extra space devoted to more detail.

MARBLED GOD: Common BIRDER shorthand for Marbled Godwit.

MARBLED MURRELET: A small West Coast ALCID, the second great PLACEHOLDER, adopted when legal challenges to protection of the SPOTTED OWL were initiated.

MARSH: WETLAND, typically with taller vegetation, in which a BIRDER gets wet to at least the knees. See BOG.

MARSH HAWK: The Northern Harrier. Early North American ORNITHOLOGISTS rejected traditional bird names to prove they were not in thrall to their European counterparts. Other examples included Duck Hawk for Peregrine, Pigeon Hawk for Merlin, and Sparrow Hawk for Kestrel. Such jingoism was not abandoned until the middle of the 20th Century.

MARSH HEN: FOLK NAME, still fairly commonly used by BIRDWATCHERS, for any large rail, especially King and Clapper (see CLING RAIL). Its durability reflects in part the inability of most birdwatchers to tell large rails apart, whether heard or seen (see LARGE RAIL SP.).

MASCOT BIRDS: Not the names of sports teams, such as Baltimore Orioles, but national birds such as Common Loon in Canada or BALD EAGLE in the United States.

MAST: Acorns and the fruits of other deciduous trees once they have dropped to the ground. Mast is an important WINTER food resource for many animals. The common usage, "There is an excellent mast crop this year," means, "There are a lot of acorns around."

MATE GUARDING: Behavior in which the male obsessively follows the female in an effort to stop her from being pursued by, or pursuing, other males, necessary because AVIAN breeding behaviors are highly flexible. In humans, the only species in which the roles are occasionally reversed, the behavior is called jealousy and often requires professional intervention.

MATING: Not, as humans typically use the word, a single act, but a season-long process involving all the behaviors necessary to produce young, the act itself being among the briefest and least complicated.

MATING FOR LIFE: Anthropomorphic virtue assigned to species that typically change partners less frequently than once a year.

MATTRESS THRASHER: Fanciful species frequently trotted out in a futile attempt to prove BIRDERS have a sense of humor. See GASHAWK.

MATURITY: In birds, the age of first breeding. In humans, the relationship between maturity and producing offspring is considerably more tenuous.

MAXILLA: Technical term for the upper half of a bird's BILL. The term UPPER MANDIBLE is technically incorrect but see that entry. See also MANDIBLE.

MCBIRD: BIRDER for Ring-billed Gull for their habit of hanging around fast food parking lots cadging French fries and other indigestible fare.

MEADOW: Any treeless HABITAT with interesting birds or one that has been less obviously altered by humans. See FIELD.

MEDIUM FALCON SP.: Designation suggesting that the American Kestrel seen briefly may have been a Merlin. See LARGE ACCIPITER SP., LARGE FALCON SP., SP.

MEGAFAUNA: Technically, an animal large enough to be seen with the naked eye and thus dependent on the visual acuity of the observer. In practice, large, gaudy, admired animals such as cats, WHALES, and Peregrine Falcons, for which it is easy to generate public support.

MEGATICK: British BIRDWATCHING slang for a fabulous bird. See COSMIC MIND-BLOWER.

MELANISM: The opposite of ALBINISM; that is the presence of black or very dark feathers in place of normal ones. Although melanism may be as common as albinism, it is far less frequently reported because it is usually less obvious and because a large number of the birds that BIRDWATCHERS see are backlit and look dark anyway.

MERG: BIRDER shorthand for merganser, as in Hooded Merg. So well established that it is heard much more frequently than the longer version.

MEW GULL: North American name for the species that in the OLD WORLD is called COMMON GULL. The difference in name, as well as PLUMAGE, has led many BIRDWATCHERS, who would rather have gum surgery than read LATIN NAMES, to assume they are separate species, a view that ORNITHOLOGISTS will undoubtedly endorse in time.

MIGRANT: Any bird on the move.

MIGRATION: Any movement by any animal from one area to another at any season and for any reason. For BIRDWATCHERS, shorthand for the mass movements in SPRING and FALL, exemplified by the common usage: "Migration was a little slow this year." See REVERSE MIGRATION, ALTITUDINAL MIGRATION, LEAPFROG MIGRATION, DIFFERENTIAL MIGRATION.

MIGRATION WATCH: Assumption that it is possible to monitor bird movements based on how many are seen at a specific site by one or more observers, independent of the day-to-day and year-to-year variations in WEATHER, visibility, or the skill and interest of the watchers.

MILLPOND CONDITIONS: Said when a body of water is as flat as glass, with no waves. At sea, millpond conditions occur only on days when no PELAGIC TRIPS are scheduled. Irritatingly, SEABIRDS are much harder to find in millpond conditions.

MIRROR IMAGE MIGRATION: Fanciful theory that the occurrence of eastern birds in the West and western birds in the East can be explained by a genetic distortion of the MIGRATION path by 45, 90, or 180 degrees. See BIRDS HAVE WINGS AND SOMETIMES USE THEM.

MISSISSIPPI KITE: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

MITES ON A MERLIN: See TERTIAL FRINGE SCHOOL.

MIXED SEED: Succotash for birds. Most birds, like small children, eat carefully around the less desirable items.

MOB: (M)any (OB)servers, a serendipitous formation for when large numbers of people see a rare bird, thus increasing the reliability of the REPORT.

MOBBING: A noisy, hectoring group of like-minded birds joined in an effort to drive a socially undesirable type, such as a hawk or owl, from the neighborhood. The AVIAN equivalent of throwing bricks through the window or burning crosses on the lawn.

MOCKER: Common shorthand for NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD.

MODELING: Science based on the presumption that a computer model created by someone who has never seen a bird outside of a kitchen can tell us in seconds what a century of field observation has not.

MODO: Bander code for Mourning Dove, widely used conversationally by BIRDWATCHERS, both syllables pronounced with a long "O."

MOLT: The replacement of worn feathers with new ones. The way birds change clothes.

MONKEY-WRENCHING: Subculturally-popular euphemism for ECOTAGE, from Edward Abbey's cult novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*.

MONOCULTURE: Large areas covered by a single species of plant, such as agricultural FIELDS and TREE FARMS, usually beneficial to a few specialized species but useless for most.

MONOGAMOUS: Said of birds that are discreet about their infidelities.

MONOTYPIC: Said of a bird that, under current knowledge, has no close relatives and thus is temporarily assigned to a family all its own.

MOONWATCH: A form of BIRDWATCHING in which a TELESCOPE is pointed at the moon and the fleeting silhouettes of migrating birds passing in front of it are counted and subjected to lengthy, unresolvable debates over identification. Only possible, like so many other unexplainable human activities, during a full moon.

MORPH: A genetically controlled color variation within a species. For example, Snow Geese have both blue and white morphs. See PHASE.

MORTALITY, NATURAL: Your cat caught a starling.

MORTALITY, UNNATURAL: Your neighbor's cat caught a bluebird.

MORTAL LOCK: A bird so certain to be seen on a BIG DAY or similar effort that it can be mentioned in advance with impunity and will appear on the final list no matter what the conditions or circumstances. A CAN'T MISS bird with a guarantee.

MOSAIC: Convenient catchall for an area in which a variety of small, overlapping HABITATS occur, making a formal description too much work. Thus, a species may be described as breeding in "...saplings in a mosaic habitat..." which tells the reader almost nothing.

MOSQUITO: One of the big five (see CHIGGER). The pestilential numbers found in prime locations make the mosquito the most talked about of the insects that BIRDWATCHERS hate, and more money and effort is spent trying to avoid them then is invested for all other insects combined. Mosquitoes are such a universal BIRDWATCHING experience that a cachet has developed around horror stories, leading to a "can-you-top-this" competition in which exaggeration about numbers and size is admired. See INSECT REPELLENT.

MS: More of the Same. See BS, PHD.

MUDFLAT: BIRDER slang for any unvegetated HABITAT adjacent to water, including sandbars, beaches, DREDGE SPOIL IMPOUNDMENTS, and POND edges.

MULE: BIRD FANCIER'S term for HYBRID offspring between a canary and any other species of finch.

MULTIPLE USE: Rallying cry of those who do not want mining, logging, hunting, and off-road vehicles banned from NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES and other PUBLIC LANDS.

MURPHY'S RULE: Tendency for birds on islands to have larger BILLS than related species on larger land masses. Applies to humans in some instances.

MUTUALISM: One species taking advantage of another's behavior to secure food or other resources, as long as the one doing the work does not complain.

MYSTERY BIRD: Any bird the observer cannot identify. Mystery birds are common topics at bird club meetings, in local newsletters, and on the Internet. The mystery is almost always the result of brief observation and the belief that if the finder can't identify it, the bird must be ABERRANT or rare. Except in the few instances when photographs are available, mystery birds are never resolved because the description is invariably limited to a single, bizarre, misperceived characteristic.

NACUL: Formed from NAture and CULture, describes a building that is "environmentally friendly," typically constructed of non-polluting materials and using solar or other passive systems of heating and cooling. Environmental hype predicated on the self-congratulatory conceit that such efforts matter to a WARBLER looking for a woodlot and finding a building. The only NACUL structures are those that have not been built yet.

NAMC (NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT): CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT in May, one of the fastest growing volunteer projects in BIRDWATCHING history because it provides a semi-legitimate excuse to spend all day in the field at the best time of the year.

NASHVILLE WARBLER: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY: America's first environmental organization, formed to protect birds and their HABITAT. Suffering from low self-esteem, it is constantly trying to change its image.

NATIONAL BIOLOGICAL SERVICE: Federal agency previously known as the National Biological Survey, which took over from the original Biological Service, proving that changing government principally consists of renaming it.

NATIONAL FOREST: Large tracts of temporarily wooded land, set aside using taxpayer dollars, so that logging companies will have a ready supply of nearly free trees.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: Federal agency of concessionaires and parking lot attendants whose primary objective is to lure so many people into the parks that there is no room left for WILDLIFE, thereby justifying large allocations for restoration projects.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE: Land set aside for hunters and GAME SPECIES which BIRDWATCHERS are allowed to visit, for a fee, in the off season, if they do not disturb the birds.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BIRD CHECKLIST: Fantasy document, compiled by someone who knows little about birds, using the SIGHTINGS LIST. Reading one often provides an amusing diversion on a slow day.

NATIVE: In biology, present at the time humans first arrived. The boundary between native and ALIEN or INTRODUCED is marked by human awareness. All change in species POPULATION and range prior to that time is considered natural. All subsequent change is considered human-induced, no matter what natural forces are involved.

NATURAL SELECTION: After EVOLUTION, the most misunderstood, abused, misapplied biological term, often to explain and excuse every observation and

intuition about any living organism. Used by anyone except an evolutionary biologist, it is best ignored. See SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

NATURALIZED SPECIES: INTRODUCED SPECIES so well established that there is no hope of getting rid of it.

NAVIGATION: Inclusive term for the methods birds use to find their way from one place to another, including, we think, position of the stars, position of the sun, electromagnetic fields, ultraviolet light, low-level sound waves, and landmarks. Particularly useful in the many cases in which we have not discovered which method is used.

NE: Not New England, but Atlas code for Nest with Eggs. See NY.

NEARCTIC: Term, created by scientists, for the Arctic regions of NORTH AMERICA. Compare to PALEARCTIC. Although the terms are useful, most BIRDWATCHERS cannot keep them straight and thus refer to "the Arctic," meaning, "North of where I am standing at the time."

NEED: Very common BIRDER euphemism for "It's not on my life, state, etc. list." When a BIRDER says he needs a Sabine's Gull, it means there is an unsightly hole in his checklist.

NEST BOX PROGRAMS: The application of what we have learned from low income housing projects to bird HABITAT restoration.

NESTLING: A baby bird, still in the nest and unable to fly. See HATCHLING.

NEST ROBBING: Much despised FORAGING technique used by some birds, such as jays, and many other predators. Those who are most revolted by it are often the same people who most admire hawks and glory in their taking of adult prey.

NET CASUALTY: Euphemism for a bird that has died as a result of banding, either because it was mishandled, left in the net too long, or expired of unknown cause, generally conceded but not proven to be, fright. Net casualties are rare and banders plagued with multiple instances have their permits revoked, which does not inspire honesty in reporting. It is also a euphemism for a bird deliberately killed, even though the bander lacks a permit for COLLECTING, so that it can be added to a collection.

NET LINE: BIRD BANDER term for a row of mist nets cutting across a HABITAT, thus reducing the chance a bird will frustrate a bander by flying around a single net.

NET RUN: Bander's term, implying a certain drama, for checking the nets to see if any birds have been caught. Many banders, having announced that they are going to make a net run, set off with a stride eerily reminiscent of Clint Eastwood going through batwing doors.

NEWFOUNDLAND: The K-Mart of North American BIRDING. Only the jingoism of American BIRDERS keeps it from becoming the ATTU of the East.

NEW WORLD: Convenient shorthand for BIRDWATCHERS and authors because most people have to pause to remember which is the Eastern Hemisphere and which is the Western. See OLD WORLD.

NFF (NO FREAKING FEATHERS): Used dismissively by dedicated BIRDERS to refer to other life forms, especially butterflies. Freaking is a euphemism not always employed, especially when one's companions consistently interrupt a BIRDING trip to watch non-birds.

NGO (NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION): A private group whose authority is moral and whose influence is limited by its persuasiveness. NGOs are derided but rarely feared by their opponents and targets. See QUANGO.

NIB (NO INTRODUCED BIRDS): A self-congratulatory conceit held by some BIRDERS that the most ABUNDANT birds in NORTH AMERICA should not be counted on lists because they are not NATIVE and are therefore undesirable. The prejudice against INTRODUCED SPECIES extends to all living organisms except humans.

NIGER SEED: Slightly less expensive alternative to THISTLE SEED.

NIGHT-HERON: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Black-crowned Night-Heron. See DIVER.

NIMBY (NOT IN MY BACKYARD): Designation given to passionate environmentalists determined to launch massive and disruptive programs in a less inconvenient place.

NO HEARD BIRDS: A rule invented by LISTERS that proclaims that a bird is not present unless it is seen, no matter how loudly and persistently it is singing or how much more reliably it is identified by voice than sight. It has been suggested but not proven that the intent is to make it hard for beginning listers to catch up with experienced ones.

NOISE POLLUTION: A car full of teenagers with the radio on, kids playing tag, a lawnmower, or a passing car when you are trying to watch birds, even if it is in a public park, suburban neighborhood, or on a highway.

NOMENCLATURE: The inexact science, more rarely art, concerned with the naming of birds and other organisms. There is an obvious relationship between nomenclature and TAXONOMY, but they are not synonymous, although they are frequently treated as such, even by people who know better.

NON-BITING MIDGE: Although scientists swear that there are NO SEE UMS that do not bite, BIRDWATCHERS consider this a myth.

NONCONSUMPTIVE RECREATION: Window shopping. See CONSUMPTIVE RECREATION.

NONGAME SPECIES: Birds that people shoot illegally and for which there is always limited funding. The best way to ensure the survival of an ENDANGERED SPECIES is to have it designated a GAME SPECIES.

NONLISTERS: BIRDERS who pretend not to know how many birds they have seen and who profess to be unaffected by being the only people to miss the rare bird at their neighbor's feeder. Nonlisters automatically become LISTERS whenever their totals put them in the top ten of any category.

NONRENEWABLE RESOURCE: What almost all RENEWABLE RESOURCES actually are.

NONSCIENTIFIC: Popular charge leveled against papers by opponents who find it difficult or time-consuming to rebut the specifics, it is also a charge useful in dismissing works by amateurs.

NOR'EASTER: Storm that inspires hope in BIRDERS along the Atlantic Coast because it often brings SEABIRDS close to land. But see GALE.

NORTH AMERICA: For BIRDWATCHERS, the United States and Canada, the geographical boundaries drawn by early LISTERS who did not want to include

non-English speaking countries or ones where travel was difficult. For the rest of the world, Mexico is included, leaving many birdwatchers confused by which version is correct. See CANUSA.

NORTH AMERICAN WOOD WARBLER: A group of birds so named in spite of the fact that they spend eight months a year in Central and South America.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK: The most recent of the great PLACEHOLDER species. Defenders of the Northern Goshawk are primarily interested in limiting or halting timber harvesting on federal lands and the preservation of OLD GROWTH FOREST. See ENDANGERED SPECIES (Definition 2).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD: The species that accounts for most reports of shrikes and almost all reports of out-of-range Townsend's Solitaires by beginning BIRDWATCHERS.

NO SEE UM: One of the big five (see CHIGGER). Tiny midges whose painful bite is completely disproportionate to their size.

NO SURPRISES: Policy immunizing businesses and landowners from the strictures of the laws protecting ENDANGERED SPECIES if they are found after an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT is filed or other agreements entered into. Despite the suspicions of critics, there is no proof yet that the policy has encouraged superficial initial assessments.

NOT LIST: The list of expected birds not seen on a trip, reflecting either changing abundance or, more often, an obsession with making lists.

NO TRESPASSING: Signs that BIRDWATCHERS do not believe apply to them because of their benign intentions, especially if there is a rare or interesting bird present.

NO WATER: Not arid, but occasional BIRDER shorthand for Northern Waterthrush.

NUCHAL: Science talk for "of the nape."

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: Hated by environmentalists but attractive to BIRDERS because the warm water outflow keeps RIVERS open in WINTER, concentrating birds. See DAM.

NULL HYPOTHESIS: Trick scientists use to keep themselves honest. To combat bias, researchers often set out to prove the opposite of what they expect to find, which is the null hypothesis. The effectiveness of the trick depends on how successful the deliberate self-delusion is.

NUT: Derogatory term used by BIRD FEEDERS to describe EXPERT BIRDERS, BACKYARD BIRDERS, and FEEDER WATCHERS.

NY: Not New York, but breeding bird Atlas code for Nest with Young. Atlas field workers use numerous single and double letter codes to report evidence of breeding. With Atlas projects completed or ongoing in more than half the states and provinces, the commonest of the codes have begun to appear regularly in conversation and some writing.

OBLIGATE: Disparaging term for a species unwilling or unable to change its behavior or diet in response to HABITAT destruction.

OCCAM'S RAZOR: Biological axiom that says that when you have to choose between explanations, pick the one that requires the fewest assumptions, which is another way of saying, don't bend, fold, and otherwise mangle the data to make it

conform to a pet theory. See BIRDS HAVE WINGS AND SOMETIMES USE THEM.

OCEANIC: General, and generally meaningless, alternative for BIRDWATCHERS for whom the word pelagic is too daunting.

OFFSHORE: PELAGIC TRIP that does not go far enough from land to reach deep water and interesting birds. An opportunity to get seasick while observing birds that can be seen from the beach.

OFFSHORE ISLAND: Popular redundancy among ecologists, made marginally tolerable by the increasing application of "island" to any isolated HABITAT, which, ultimately, almost all of them are.

OLD GROWTH FOREST: The current altar at which North American environmentalists pray, replacing the oceans, and before that, riparian HABITAT. Although all are equally valuable and in need of protection, there is a predictable cycle to the changing of the one at the top of the list, driven by the short attention span of the public and the related fund-raising frenzy.

OLDSQUAW: A type of SEADUCK. Named for its CALL, which reminded early ORNITHOLOGISTS of the chatter of a gathering of "old squaws." It is an exemplar of the fact that males and male attitudes historically dominated (and still largely do), most sciences. In Europe, where they are more sensitive to such slights, it is called LONG-TAILED DUCK.

OLD WORLD: Convenient shorthand for BIRDWATCHERS and authors that includes all of Europe, and when useful, Asia and/or Africa. See NEW WORLD.

OMNIVOROUS: Birds that will, like humans, eat anything, even burgers and fries.

ON: Breeding bird Atlas code for Occupied Nest, the "I know it's a nest but I am not going to crawl into that briar patch to see what's in it" category. See NY.

ONE-DAY WONDER: Rare bird, probably believable, that had the bad manners to leave before you could get there.

ONE O'CLOCK WARBLER: In the past, BIRDERS typically pointed out a bird to others by shouting, "There's a warbler in the oak tree at one o'clock!" The technique relied on using the position of the hands of a clock to pinpoint the location, but as more people use digital rather than analog clocks and watches, the technique has grown less effective and a growing number of companions are baffled by the directions.

OOLOGY: Now nearly defunct science of the study and collection of eggs. From a Greek word, not as is sometimes assumed, because all those "O"s remind one of eggs.

OPEN-AIR ZOO: Places, such as HAWAII and south Florida, where so many non-NATIVE species have taken hold that it is difficult to go BIRDING there without carrying FIELD GUIDES covering every region of the planet.

OPEN SPACE: Comforting sounding name given to small patches of trees and grass left scattered around during the construction of housing developments. In the beginning, open spaces were mistakenly promoted as HABITAT preservation, although the real beneficiaries were always people. Now that we have undeniable evidence that these remnants provide no WILDLIFE benefit, the deliberate suggestion that they are habitat friendly is fraudulent.

OPTICAL ILLUSION: Under some circumstances, an acceptable excuse for misidentification. Can be overused.

OPTICAL LOCK: BIRDER term for the precise moment that a bird is located in the BINOCULARS or TELESCOPE and the focus is perfected, which is, in the view of most BIRDWATCHERS, also the precise moment when the bird chooses to fly away.

OPTIMAL FORAGING THEORY: Not unexpected discovery that birds forage in the manner likely to result in the most food.

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE: Statistics. A number's order of magnitude is increased or decreased by adding or subtracting a zero. Thus 1000 becomes 10,000 or 100. "Within an order of magnitude" is the closest most BIRDWATCHERS hope to come when estimating the size of bird flocks.

ORIENTATION: In birds, refers to direction, not sexual preference, most commonly the line of flight taken during MIGRATION.

ORIGIN UNCERTAIN: Designation given to an ESCAPE when one or more members of the RECORDS COMMITTEE making the determination saw the bird and wish to add it to their lists.

ORNITHOGEOGRAPHY: The study of the distribution of birds. An imprecisely defined discipline, primarily the invention of a few PROFESSIONAL BIRDWATCHERS that encompasses whatever pays.

ORNITHO-GOLFING: Term invented by NONLISTERS to refer to the activities of BIG DAY participants and LISTERS. It survives because it is cute, not because it makes sense.

ORNITHOGRAPHY: Lexicographer's term for any writing about birds, from Wordsworth to BIG DAY reports.

ORNITHOLOGICAL HEADACHE: A medical condition in which a BIRDWATCHER making a first visit to a new area, usually in the tropics, sees 200–300 new species in one day, resulting in a sensory overload so severe that it is impossible to remember what any of the birds looked like, or what their names were. Many victims spend their second day in the bar of the hotel, sampling local drinks and arguing politics with expatriates.

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE: Technical, semi-technical, and pseudo-technical writing about birds. It may be ornithological but it is rarely literature.

ORNITHOLOGICAL MYSTERY SONG: Vocalization that has confounded ORNITHOLOGISTS and BIRDWATCHERS for more than a century, attributed to various rails and leading to intemperate words by scientists and field workers defending different species as the source. It is given by all rails. See KICKER CALL.

ORNITHOLOGIST: Scientist who studies but does not watch birds. BIRDWATCHERS, no matter how obsessive or dedicated or self-important, are not ornithologists. See FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST.

ORNITHOMANCY: The practice of predicting the future using bird behavior, numbers, or parts. In primitive cultures it is an important religious and social ritual. In modern society it is fraud.

ORV (OFF ROAD VEHICLE): Vehicle much beloved by BIRDWATCHERS for the access it gives them to remote areas and beaches but which they believe is an instrument of evil in the hands of non-birdwatchers.

OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS: Not as you might suppose, nature lovers, but those who like to shoot, hook, trap, and mash HABITAT under balloon tires.

OUTLIER: Said of usually one or several pairs of birds nesting beyond the perceived range. Subtly, but not always, differentiated from DISJUNCT by the suggestion of smaller numbers, less permanence, and by being geographically closer to the core range. The distinctions are imprecise. See RELICT.

OVARIES: In most female birds only one ovary, usually the left, is functional, a reproductive crapshoot that humans find unappealing.

OVERSPECIALIZATION: Characterization given to birds that suffer from inability to adapt to changes in the environment and have become ENDANGERED or EXTINCT. Suggests that it is their own fault, as if they had done it to annoy us.

OWL PROWL: A nocturnal FIELD TRIP in which a leader tries to call in owls while a large group stands around drowning out the effort with conversation and periodically responding to the sounds of distant machinery by yelling, "There's one!"

OYSTERCATCHER: Most misnamed North American bird. Anyone can catch oysters, which are notoriously slow, but try opening one using only your mouth. The species should be named "Oystershucker."

OYSTERSNATCHER: Fairly common BIRDER cute, not unattractive, for OYSTERCATCHER.

PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER/CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER: The names assigned by the AOU to the two species created when the Western Flycatcher was SPLIT. Compelling proof that ornithology was better off when birds were named by individuals rather than committees.

PAGER SYSTEM: In Great Britain, a wildly popular method of disseminating information about rare birds, and many TWITCHERS hyperventilate if they misplace their pagers. Has not caught on in NORTH AMERICA because the distances are too great.

PAIR BOND: A tenuous relationship that commonly does not preclude a variety of infidelities designed to produce the maximum number of evolutionarily fit young. As in humans, the bond is rarely stronger than the first opportunity to improve one's situation.

PALEARCTIC: The Arctic regions of Europe and Asia. See NEARCTIC.

PANDEMIC: Science speak for "found everywhere." See COSMOPOLITAN.

PANTING: What a bird does to reduce body heat, having nothing to do with COPULATION.

PARASITE: Any organism whose dependence on another organism exceeds our definition of tolerable behavior.

PARASPECIES: See ARMCHAIR SPECIES.

PARKE'S PARADOX: Discovery by ORNITHOLOGIST Ken Parkes that in some families, especially warblers, HYBRIDS are likely to occur between more distantly related rather than more closely related species. BIRDWATCHERS,

familiar with the intensely studied exception, Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers, are largely ignorant of the situation and continue to treat less expected pairings as bizarre and titillating.

PARTIAL MIGRANT: Species in which some individuals migrate and some do not. See LEAPFROG MIGRATION.

PARULID: A member of the NORTH AMERICAN WOOD WARBLER family. Where a BIRDWATCHER would say, "Of course it's in the top of the tree, it's a warbler" a scientist would use parulid to distinguish it from other, unrelated birds not found in this hemisphere and also called, confusingly, warblers. A few BIRDWATCHERS use parulid because they know it will impress some of their audience and confuse the rest.

PARVORDER: One of dozens of horribly-named new groupings of birds made possible, but not necessary, by advances in DNA research. Don't ask about the others. You don't want to know and besides, this is an impermanent situation.

PASSAGE HAWK: Name given to any hawk that has made the mistake of leaving its breeding grounds, where it is protected, thus becoming the legal property of any FALCONER who can catch it.

PASSENGER PIGEON. Arguably once the most ABUNDANT species in the world, hunted to the brink of extinction and then pushed over by its own breeding behavior (see ALLEE EFFECT). The slaughter took place even before we had significant technology to bring to the effort, which does not bode well for the current targets of our affection. See WILSON'S STORM-PETREL.

PATAGONIA PICNIC TABLE EFFECT: Expression for the predictable consequence of a location becoming a HOTSPOT. Named for the Patagonia rest stop in southeast Arizona where the discovery of one RARITY led to an influx of BIRDERS and the predictable discovery of many more.

PATCH BASHING: Brit BIRDING jargon for intensive, even obsessive, coverage of your LOCAL PATCH.

PATHETIC FALLACY: Term borrowed from logic to explain the belief that other BIRDWATCHERS will enjoy your interminable, badly-written thoughts and experiences because they are about birds. See TRIP REPORT.

PATRONYMICS: An early form of debt service. In the old days, ORNITHOLOGISTS named birds after people they owed money, their jobs, or other favors to. The practice declined when the number of new birds found dropped to one or two a year and when individuals stopped funding ornithological research.

PECKING ORDER: Highly ritualized hierarchy which provides first access to food, HABITAT, and females to the dominant male, with benefits slowly working their way down through the ranks. The pecking order provides stability, minimal conflict, and the survival and reproductive success of the strongest. Perfectly analogous in structure and practice to corporate employment.

PECTORAL: Science for "of the breast."

PEDOPHOBIA: Fear of children, the commonest psychological disorder among BIRDERS, less common among BIRDWATCHERS.

PEEBEEGEEBEE: Insufferably cute BIRDER shorthand for Pied-billed Grebe.

PEENT: Nasal CALL given by both the American Woodcock and the Common Nighthawk and occasionally used as a shorthand name for either. The calls are similar and the peent of woodcock, which will call year-round, accounts for all heard only REPORTS of Common Nighthawk in NORTH AMERICA. Heard only birds account for 99 percent of the reports.

PEEP: Widely, but not always, used to include the smaller members of the SHOREBIRD family, primarily the members of the genus *CALIDRIS*, such as Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, etc. Not named because one so rarely gets more than a peep at them, but for the short sharp note some give when flushed.

PEER-REVIEWED: In theory, papers in scientific journals are reviewed by other scientists involved in the specific area of research. Since the reviewer usually opposes the conclusion or was used as a resource by the author, the process is imperfect, a result of the small-pond effect. In the cases where the reviewer is disinterested, the reading is often superficial.

PELAGIC TRIP: An organized party at which a group pays several hundred dollars to watch four or five volunteers throw up for eight hours. As a sideshow, EXPERTS periodically announce that several miles away a rare bird is flying behind a wave.

PELLET: Owls, hawks, and some other birds spit up the indigestible parts of their meals as pellets, which is socially acceptable in AVIAN circles but is tolerated in humans only when babies reject offerings like creamed spinach.

PEN: Hunter and WATERFOWL BREEDER jargon for a female swan. See DRAKE.

PENIS: Male sexual organ which, with the exception of WATERFOWL, virtually no birds possess. Not coincidentally perhaps, rape and gang rape are only known in birds in the waterfowl family.

PERMANENT RESIDENT: Redundant designation given to birds that do not migrate.

PERMETHRIN: The second chemical that effectively protects BIRDWATCHERS from insects (see DEET). It is not a repellent, but a killer and is applied only to clothing and never to skin. It is effective in combating CHIGGERS and TICKS but is very strong and not licensed in every state. Younger BIRDERS, who still consider themselves potential breeding stock, tend to shy away from it.

PEST SPECIES: Legal term for any bird, rare or ABUNDANT, that causes any inconvenience, no matter how minor, to any influential person or group.

PETA (PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS): The Operation Rescue of the ANIMAL RIGHTS movement, a fringe group. Most BIRDWATCHERS, somewhat sympathetic to animal rights, oppose PETA because it views a lot of BIRDWATCHING behavior, such as using TAPE RECORDERS, as harassment and would prefer that BIRDING HOTSPOTS like NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES be closed to everyone.

PETERSON SYSTEM: A method of learning bird identification invented by ROGER TORY PETERSON, consisting of DIAGNOSTIC ARROWS. Although unquestionably his, it has been unconscionably appropriated by a few late-comers to the FIELD GUIDE sweepstakes who are interested only in cashing in on the growing popularity of the pastime.

PHALAROPE: A family of SHOREBIRDS in which the sexual roles are reversed. The males incubate the eggs and raise the young while the females take off as soon as the eggs are laid. The very idea of phalaropes makes feminists and the politically correct smile despite the fact that they are the decided exception and despite the fact that the sexual, MATING, and social habits of other animals have no relevance to humans, a lesson that anti-feminists, conservatives, and other troglodytes have not learned either. The correct pronunciation is "FAL-a-rope," but the jocular "fa-LAIR-o-pee" is common.

PHASE: Mistakenly used as a synonym for MORPH (which see). A morph is a permanent condition. A phase is a stage that an individual passes through, such as the terrible twos, sun worship, and, one hopes, Libertarianism. Except in rare cases, birds do not have phases.

PHD: Piled Higher and Deeper. Follows MS.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

PHOTO FIELD GUIDE: Although useless for identifying birds, very popular with publishers because they capture a large portion of the first-time buyers-of-field-guides market. Most buyers replace them with a real guide within a year.

PHOTO QUIZ: An opportunity for a friend of the editor to make other people look stupid by using a backlit, out-of-focus, black-and-white photograph of a bird that has never occurred in the area and then explaining why it is obviously a...

PHYLOGENETIC SPECIES CONCEPT: The idea that second cousins are separate species, even if they marry. Recent and increasingly popular theory that any group of birds is a species if scientists can find some way, any way at all, to tell them apart, even if it involves microscopes.

PIGEON: Any of the larger members of the family. See DOVE. The designation of a species as a pigeon or dove depends on a tenuous distinction that ORNITHOLOGISTS do not always agree on.

PILEATED WOODPECKER: The largest living North American woodpecker (See IVORY-BILLED). A meaningless but occasionally passionate debate continues over the pronunciation, the two contenders being "PILE-e-a-ted" and "PILL-e-a-ted." See BUTEO. [*Ed.: Occasionally, "PEEL-e-a-ted" or "Pie-LEET-ed."*]

PITFALL: In BIRDING lingo, an unanticipated or underappreciated identification problem, as in "There are a lot of pitfalls in gull identification."

PLACEHOLDER: An endangered species adopted by those who want to save HABITAT. See ENDANGERED SPECIES (Definition 2), SPOTTED OWL, and other species entries.

PLAYBACK: Valuable scientific method that involves playing tape recording of a bird's CALLS to elicit a response. The technique is now falling into disrepute because BIRDWATCHERS have discovered that it is terrifically effective at drawing secretive birds into view so that they may be added to various lists. Particularly popular among those who believe that looking for birds, rather than at them, is time wasted.

PLUMAGE: Fancy name for the colors of a bird's feathers.

PLUME: A feather as fashion.

PMNOPML (PAY ME NOW OR PAY ME LATER): Advertising slogan naively appropriated by BIRDWATCHERS who believe that unless government invests in species preservation now it will be forced to spend much larger sums later. There is no evidence that it is true.

POACHING: The only capital offense on CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, the act of sneaking into another person's territory to see or find a GOOD BIRD. This either shows up the other person or deprives them of the pleasure of an EXCLUSIVE at the ROUND-UP. Life-long friendships and marriages can end because of poaching.

POLLUTION: Those things added to the environment that are inimical to the health or economic interests of humans.

POLYGAMY: A babe on the side. A natural and instructive aspect of EVOLUTION.

POLYGYNY: A stud on the side. Perverted.

POND: A body of water small enough that the birds on it can be identified using BINOCULARS. What is a pond for some BIRDWATCHERS is a LAKE for others.

POOTOO: The name of a species of bird, suggesting to some that ORNITHOLOGISTS do have a sense of humor.

POPULATION: The total number of a species. Except is a few cases, the number is at best an estimate, more often a GUESTIMATE, and most frequently a SWAG.

POPULATION SINK: A superficially attractive site (see STRIP MINE) which concentrates numbers of HABITAT-specific birds but where reproductive rates are so low that new birds have to show up every year. A local POPULATION death trap.

PORTLANDICA PLUMAGE: Early ORNITHOLOGISTS, confused by MOLT and PLUMAGE sequence of terns, so-labeled SUBADULT birds collected in SUMMER near Portland, Maine. The name persists with BIRDERS who do not know the history.

PORTRAIT: Stunning, frame-filling picture of a bird, good enough to be on the cover of a glossy nature magazine. Most portrait shots are of cardinals, robins, chickadees, and other ABUNDANT and backyard birds. See RECORD SHOT.

POSIE SNIFFER: See TREE HUGGER.

POSTERIOR: Science for the rear end of a bird. See ANTERIOR.

POULTRY: Chickens, not birds.

PRAIRIE VULTURE: Common BIRDER lingo for gulls.

PREACHER BIRD: FOLK NAME, still heard sometimes, for Red-eyed Vireo because of its endless, repetitive song, the name saying more about the conflicting feelings Americans have toward preachers than it says about the bird.

PRECOCIAL: Refers to baby birds that are able to move about and feed themselves immediately upon hatching, a trait much envied by humans.

PREDATE: Ugly new verb backformed from predation. Confusion sometimes arises from sentences like: "The eggs predate the nestlings...," meaning come before, another ugly usage.

PREDATION EVENT: Particularly awful jargon, a euphemism for one animal killing another. The phrase "...a predation event involving an eagle and a hare..." is repulsive to careful readers, but apparently not to many editors and writers.

PREDATOR/PREY RELATIONSHIPS: A euphemistic way of discussing who kills and who is killed. If non-human animals had any awareness of the concept, which they do not, the predators would undoubtedly be more enthusiastic than the prey about the idea that it is a relationship.

PREENING: AVIAN equivalent of a shower, haircut, and a new outfit. The difference is that in birds most preening is practical rather than predatory. But see ALLOPREENING for exception.

PRELIMINARY ID: Escape hatch for the wary.

PRE-NESTING BEHAVIOR: Dating.

PRESERVATIONISTS: The nuclear-freezeniks of the environmental movement, people who want to preserve the earth in its current disastrous state. See RESTORATIONIST.

PRISTINE: Any HABITAT that is superficially undisturbed or unpolluted.

PRODUCTIVITY: In every living organism except human beings, productivity is measured solely by the number of offspring produced. If humans adopted the same naturalistic interpretation, they would quickly become the only living thing on the planet, which would be a spectacularly brief ascendancy.

PROFESSIONAL BIRDWATCHER: Someone whose social and occupational skills are so limited that they eke out a living doing bird surveys and writing PHOTO QUIZZES.

PRO-JOB: Politically attractive alternative to anti-environmental.

PROMISCUITY: Highly judgmental and anthropomorphic term used to describe any bird that does not meet human standards of monogamy and fidelity. Popular with those who are unable to view the natural world except through their own moral kaleidoscope.

PROPERTY RIGHTS: Rallying cry of anti-environmentalists, recalling the State's Rights Movement of anti-integrationists. Most BIRDWATCHERS believe in property rights except when they come into conflict with bird preservation or access to rare birds.

PSEUDOSPECIES: See ARMCHAIR SPECIES.

PTARMIGAN: 1) Members of the CHICKEN FAMILY, which are normally looked down on by BIRDWATCHERS, but given a pass because they are little hunted and because the spelling of the name tickles them. 2) OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Rock Ptarmigan. See SWALLOW.

PUBLIC LANDS: Land paid for with taxpayer money and managed by the government for the benefit of wealthy special interests.

PUFI: Bander's code for Purple Finch, occasionally used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced like "puffy."

PUMA: Bander's code for PURPLE MARTIN, commonly used conversationally by BIRDWATCHERS. The pronunciation is the same as in the big cat.

PUNK: Occasional BIRDER slang for young or SUBADULT, as in, "We saw a punk Osprey at the lake." Most common among HAWKWATCHERS.

PURPLE MARTIN: The most popular backyard bird in NORTH AMERICA and thus the object of a disproportionate number of scientific studies. What most people, including BIRDWATCHERS, know about Purple Martins is fatally contaminated by myth and anecdote. See PURPLE MARTINS EATING 2,000 MOSQUITOES A DAY.

PURPLE MARTINS EATING 2,000 MOSQUITOES A DAY: The most frequently reported and repeated myth about any bird anywhere in the world. Despite there being ample evidence to refute the claim, it survives in part because many promoters of martin houses proclaim it at every opportunity. A potentially rich source of study by social scientists because people who erect martin houses in their yards insist that the birds eliminate the mosquitoes, even though it is untrue.

PURPLE PATCH: A LOCAL PATCH that has become a temporary HOTSPOT, especially one that has produced multiple rarities in a short time.

PUT-AND-TAKE HUNTING: Hunting in which land managers put pen-raised DUCKS on baited PONDS in front of blinds for hunters to shoot. About as sporting as trying to decide which steak to buy at the local supermarket, but increasingly popular in areas where ducks have been overhunted and are hard to find.

PUTTING GREEN: Dismissive term used by BIRDWATCHERS to describe over-mowed, sprayed, and manicured suburban lawns, a HABITAT virtually no birds use. Birdwatchers who have putting-green lawns are quick to point out that it is a community requirement.

PYLE: BIRDER shorthand for the *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, the BIRD BANDER's bible written by Peter Pyle. It contains an unimaginable amount of information about AGEING, SEXING, and identification but is rarely mined by BIRDERS because it requires mastering banding terminology, parts of a bird, and MOLT sequences. It is the most valuable and underused BIRDING reference.

QUANGO (QUASI-AUTONOMOUS NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION): An NGO, such as some planning and zoning commissions and historic preservation trusts, that has acquired the right to impose its dictates despite limited public oversight. Viewed with adoration by supporters and as a symbol of communism, totalitarianism, Nazism, and the end of civilization as we know it by critics and victims.

QUANTITATIVE: Ennobling descriptor commonly attached to their own research by authors. Quantitative research means that things were measured and counted rather than estimated and eyeballed.

QUARRY SPECIES: Britspeak for GAME SPECIES. Further evidence of their pre-eminence in using and manipulating the language we almost share.

QUESTAR: The nuclear bomb of BIRDING optics. For $4000 you can tell people that the object they cannot see through $800 BINOCULARS is a small brown bird.

QUICK-AND-DIRTY BIRDING: Occasional bout of excess in which speed takes precedence over accuracy. Great for list building.

QUICK LOCK: A system that makes it possible to attach a TELESCOPE to a tripod in seconds but makes it impossible to hold it perfectly still.

RABBIT SHERIFFS: See KATFISH KOPS.

RACE: Before we became terrified that anything we said might offend someone, a term commonly used as a synonym for SUBSPECIES.

RADIO TELEMETRY: The newest hi-tech toy of field researchers, using micro-transmitters and satellites to track movements of individual birds. The newness makes it exciting and it is applied not on the basis of need but whenever funding is available, producing both new and dramatic data and inconsequential drivel, all published with equal enthusiasm.

RADIO TRACKING: Slightly less technical term for RADIO TELEMETRY.

RAFT: 1) A moderate to large group of WATERFOWL sitting on the water in tight formation, as in "There is a raft of ducks off of the point." 2) A very large but imprecise number of waterfowl, as in "There is a raft of ducks off of the point."

RAILS TO TRAILS: Conversion of old railroad rights-of-way to biking and hiking trails, another "environmental" program that backfired by bringing large numbers of people into HABITATS that were previously inaccessible and thus largely undisturbed.

RAIN BIRD: FOLK NAME for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo because it is believed to CALL just before a rainstorm. Many birds vocalize just before a rainstorm, but the call of the cuckoo is particularly distinctive and loud, making it the one likely to be noticed. The myth strengthens the comparison between folklore about birds and UFO sightings.

RAIN FOREST: For most BIRDWATCHERS, any forest south of the United States border. The confusion has been furthered by environmental groups which have discovered that the term is the most reliable fund generator they have.

RANDOM: What nature and EVOLUTION are to a far greater extent than humans are comfortable with, driven as we are to find purpose and pattern in everything. The essential randomness of existence presents a special challenge to CREATIONISTS, but even most environmentalists find it unpleasant to contemplate.

RANGE EXTENSION, NATURAL: The spread of a species because we built a bridge by altering HABITAT. Viewed with admiration.

RANGE EXTENSION, UNNATURAL: The spread of a species because we carried it over inhospitable terrain rather than building a bridge. Viewed with repugnance.

RANGE MAP: Reliable, except for the area you live in, representation of a bird's distribution.

RAPTORPHILE: A single-minded HAWKWATCHER suffering an advanced case of RAPTOR ROT. Serious raptorphiles have the same relationship to BIRDWATCHING that hunters and FALCONERS do but are treated better because they don't usually shoot anything, although they enthusiastically sacrifice live birds to feed or catch the objects of their affection.

RAPTOR ROT: Slang for the condition suffered by obsessive HAWKWATCHERS, who come to believe over time that other birds serve no purpose other than as hawk food.

RARE GULL: Oxymoron.

RARITY: A bird you find that is where EXPERTS say it shouldn't be. If someone else finds it, and it disappears before you get there, it is known as a questionable REPORT.

RATEAU: British BIRDER slang for a memorable misidentification, from the French word for rake, the implement. The origin of the use is uncertain.

RATS WITH WINGS: Common derogation for ROCK DOVE.

RAVEN: One of the bird names most recognized by the non-BIRDING public because they vaguely remember a bad poem from high school English. Almost all ravens reported by non-BIRDERS are crows.

RB NUT: Common shorthand for Red-breasted Nuthatch.

RECAPTURE: BIRD BANDER term for a bird caught at the same location where it was originally banded, at least one season later. See TRAP HAPPY.

RECORD: The occurrence of a rare bird supported by a specimen, photograph, the word of a (preferably dead) ORNITHOLOGIST of impeccable reputation, or the concurrence of so many observers that doubt is eliminated. See REPORT.

RECORDS COMMITTEE: A group of amateurs who, while individually unqualified, can collectively determine if a BIRDER they have never met saw a bird they are not familiar with, at a place they have never been, and whether the bird chose to be there or made the journey under duress.

RECORD SHOT: Distant, backlit, out of focus photograph of a rare bird identifiable only by members of a RECORDS COMMITTEE. See PORTRAIT.

RECREATIONAL AREA: Land nominally designated for preservation but managed for hunting, fishing, ORVs, and other activities inimical to HABITAT or NONGAME SPECIES.

RECREATIONAL HUNTING: Considerably more recreational for the hunter than the huntee.

RECREATIONAL USE: Designation that turns land which would otherwise have been HABITAT into a playground for OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS.

RECURVED: Curved upward, as in the BILL of avocets. See DECURVED.

RED-BACKED SANDPIPER: Old name for Dunlin, still used by BIRDWATCHERS with older FIELD GUIDES or a resistance to name changes.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: Striking bird with a red cowl and a black-and-white barred back named for a minute spot of red on the belly that, because woodpeckers spend their lives pressed against tree trunks, is never seen. There are dozens of other birds named for characters that are nearly impossible to see in the field, such as Ring-necked Duck, because early scientists named species while holding them.

REDBIRD: Old name for Northern Cardinal, still popular among FEEDER WATCHERS and BACKYARD BIRDWATCHERS.

RED CROSSBILL: The Gordian Knot of AVIAN TAXONOMY, consisting of as many as seven species identifiable only if you have both a recording of the CALL and a specimen.

RED DYE: Artificial color added to HUMMINGBIRD "nectar" as a marketing strategy effective in persuading people to pay exorbitant prices for sugar.

RED GROUSE: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Willow Ptarmigan. See DIVER.

REDPOLL: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Common Redpoll. Redpoll TAXONOMY is controversial, with one to five or six species involved, and a bewildering number of names have been used. See DIVER. [*Ed.: Old Word name is now Common Redpoll.*]

REDSTART: OLD WORLD species, a member of the Old World flycatcher family, unrelated to American Redstart and other redstarts of the NEW WORLD wood warbler family.

REDWING: OLD WORLD species, a member of the thrush family, unrelated to the North American Red-winged Blackbird, which is often referred to in the field by the shortened name "Redwing."

REEVE: A female RUFF, the only species, as opposed to group, in which the female has a separate name. Efforts by scientists to end the usage have failed because it is culturally entrenched and because BIRDWATCHERS like the word.

REHABILITATOR: A person whose commitment to saving individual lives is so intense that they will spend hours feeding live mice to hawks so badly injured that they will end up in cages at local nature centers with children poking sticks through the bars to make them fly. A form of FEEL GOOD ENVIRONMENTALISM.

REINTRODUCTION: Putting a bird back into an area from which is was previously EXTIRPATED. Misapplied to introduction efforts in some cases, such as Peregrine Falcons, Whooping Cranes, and many GAME SPECIES, to make them politically more palatable.

RELIABLE BIRDER: One who has the foresight never to misidentify a bird in front of witnesses. See UNRELIABLE BIRDER.

RELICT: Said of a breeding POPULATION found well beyond, almost always south of and at high elevations, the normal BREEDING RANGE. Based on the assumption that during the last Ice Age, northern birds bred much farther south and have been isolated by the subsequent warming of the CLIMATE. A specialized instance of a DISJUNCT population, most often used to refer to BOREAL OWLS breeding in the southern Rocky Mountains.

RELOCATION: The technique of capturing and moving rare and ENDANGERED SPECIES rather than inconveniencing landowners by saving HABITAT.

REMARKABLE IF TRUE: Popular, not quite subtle putdown of any already published REPORT of a rare bird assumed to be in error.

REMIGE: Wing feather. See RETRIX.

RENEWABLE RESOURCE: Designation predicated on the conceit that man can re-create in a decade what it took nature ten thousand years to make.

REPEATABILITY: The Holy (Unattainable) Grail of field research, the effort to design a study so elegant that it can be perfectly replicated years later, despite changes in personnel, equipment, knowledge, experience, and HABITAT.

REPORT: The occurrence of a rare bird not supported by a specimen, photograph, word of an eminent ORNITHOLOGIST, or multiple observers. The distinction from a RECORD is subtle but of critical interest to collectors of rare bird information. Single-observer reports are not considered records unless they are made by the author of the publication in which they appear.

RESERVOIR: Manmade LAKE popular with BIRDWATCHERS because in many areas it is the only body of water large enough to attract MIGRANT WATERFOWL, despite the fact that the creation of most reservoirs involves the construction of DAMS and the drowning of large stretches of riparian woodlands, a rapidly disappearing HABITAT.

RESTORATION ECOLOGY: Science of restoring a degraded HABITAT to its original, PRISTINE state, the province of those who, like Don Quixote, dream the impossible dream.

RESTORATIONISTS: Nostalgic environmentalists who want to preserve the earth in the disastrous state it was in 100 years ago. See PRESERVATIONISTS.

RETRAP: BIRD BANDER term synonymous with RECAPTURE.

RETRIX: Tail feather. Used in all scientific writing and in casual conversation by EXPERTS and FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS.

RETURN: BIRD BANDER term synonymous with RECAPTURE.

REVERSED SEXUAL DIMORPHISM (RSD): Term describing the situation, especially in hawks and owls, in which females are larger than males, the decided exception among birds. Attempts to explain RSD have generated a large number of theories, some intuitive and quixotic and most distorted by anthropomorphism. The apparent answer is that RSD allows a greater range of prey to be taken during the time when it is most important, when young are on the nest. It has, to the disappointment of many, no application to humans.

REVERSE MIGRATION: Birds flying in any direction we did not predict.

RFI (REQUEST FOR INFORMATION): Frequent HEADER on e-mail messages on BIRDWATCHING LISTSERVS. Often precedes inane questions like, "Are ducks related to geese?" or "I saw a starling. Is that unusual?" which could be answered by opening a FIELD GUIDE or looking out the window. Just as common are questions like, "What can you tell me about Bald Eagles?", a subject that has inspired hundreds of books and hundreds of thousands of pages of data.

RIKI: Bander's code for Ruby-crowned Kinglet, occasionally used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced as in gin "rickey."

RING AND FLING: Banders term for those rare days when so many birds are caught that they are merely banded and released and none of the normal data on age, sex, WING CHORD, etc., are taken. A few banders ring and fling out of laziness or because they are not interested in the data but only in the list of species handled.

RINGER: 1) Very common BIRDER shorthand for Ring-billed Gull. 2) In Great Britain, a BIRD BANDER (see RINGING).

RINGING: Britspeak for banding.

RIVER: Flowing water so wide and deep that it can only be crossed with a bridge, no matter how passionately desired the bird on the other side is. See CREEK, STREAM.

RIVER OF RAPTORS: Contrived name given to the recently discovered flight of raptors that passes near Veracruz, Mexico in the FALL. The flight numbers in the millions and is the greatest raptor spectacle known. The name is intended to enhance fundraising and publicity.

ROADKILL: What is left of an animal after it has been GOODYEARED.

ROADSIDE BIRDING: Exercise avoidance. Laid back form of DRIVE-BY BIRDING in which the observer actually stops and gets out of the car but does not walk more than a few feet.

ROBERT O'LINCOLN: FOLK NAME for Bobolink, imitative of its CALL, sort of.

ROC: Mythological species occasionally reported by the less fortunate participants on PELAGIC TRIPS.

ROCK DOVE: INTRODUCED SPECIES that has colonized the most heavily urbanized areas. Commonly referred to as a "RATS WITH WINGS" and "ROOF RATS." [*Ed.: Name is currently Rock Pigeon.*]

RODING: Lovely British term for the COURTSHIP flight of the woodcock.

RODO: Bander code for ROCK DOVE, widely used conversationally by BIRDWATCHERS. Both syllables are pronounced with a long "O." [*Ed.: Code is currently ROPI for Rock Pigeon.*]

ROGER TORY PETERSON: The most important figure in the history of BIRDWATCHING, the man who invented the modern hobby and is thus responsible for the environmental movement. Known to younger and newer BIRDERS as "Mr. Preface" because he penned the introduction to every bird book they have ever owned, although they are only imperfectly aware of why.

ROOF RAT: Common derogation for ROCK DOVE. [*Ed.: Name is currently Rock Pigeon.*]

ROOST: Site where large numbers of birds gather to spend the night together, whether or not there is a play-off game in progress.

ROSE GROS: Common BIRDER shorthand for Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Rough-legged Hawk. See DIVER.

ROUND-UP: Gathering at the end of a CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT or other collective BIRDWATCHING effort at which the totals are collected and discussed. An important entry on the social calendar, enlivened by undercurrents of competitiveness, disbelief, and posturing.

RSD: See REVERSED SEXUAL DIMORPHISM.

RUBBISH TIP: OLD WORLD name for what in NORTH AMERICA is known as a LANDFILL.

RUDDY TURNSTONE: Species which eventually inspires all practitioners of orthography to indulge the badly overused pun, "Leave no tern unstoned."

RUFF: An OLD WORLD species of SHOREBIRD. See REEVE.

RUMP: The area at the upperside of the base of the tail. BIRDERS use the term whenever a contrasting pattern is evident, even if it includes the base of the tail.

RUN-AND-GUN BIRDING: Dashing from spot to spot, checking off as many birds as possible as quickly as possible, and moving on. Practiced by LISTERS and BIRDERS trying to cover a lot of ground in a short time. Quantity rather than quality. See GUERRILLA BIRDING and BIRDING BLITZ.

SADDLE: BIRDER's term, limited almost exclusively to discussions of gulls, for the back and inner wings as viewed in flight. The area meant depends on the user and is often imprecise.

SAFE DATE: As related to birds, which are unconcerned with the possible consequences of casual liaisons, any date on which it can be assumed that an individual cannot be migrating and can thus be treated as a potential breeding species.

SAND MARTIN: What the rest of the world calls the BANK SWALLOW. Although we should adopt the older name, the change is resisted by those who let irrelevant cultural considerations override logic and the rules of TAXONOMY.

SANDPIPER: Generic and nonspecific name for some members of the SHOREBIRD family. The definition is so imprecise and individual that the word is largely meaningless, with no agreement anywhere on which species should be included within its grasp.

SAPSUCKER: A member of the woodpecker family, one of a small number of birds whose names are responsible for most BIRDWATCHING jokes and puns by comics, nonbirders, and members of the popular press. See BOOBY, WOODCOCK, WOODPECKER.

SASP: Banders code for Savannah Sparrow, sometimes used in conversation by BIRDERS. Rhymes with "gasp." In the West, Sage Sparrow, the code for which is SGSP and is unpronounceable, sometimes causes confusion.

SATURATION LEVEL: The point at which birds become more COMMON than is convenient and begin nesting under the eaves of the house.

SCAPULARS: Scientific designation for the feathers covering a bird's shoulders. Useful because birds do not have recognizable shoulders, despite names such as Red-shouldered Hawk.

SCARLET TEENAGER: BIRDER cute for Scarlet Tanager, not thankfully, very common. See SUMMER TEENAGER.

SCAVENGER: Highly derogatory term used to describe birds that do not actively hunt but feed on prey already dead, or on trash. Despite the fact that 99.99 percent of the human population feeds the same way, we never refer to ourselves as scavengers.

SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS: Anti-environmentalist term for biologists writing field reports, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS, and other assessments.

SCIENTIFIC NAME: Every living organism has a two- or three-word Latinized name unique to the species or SUBSPECIES, the scientific name, sometimes casually referred to as the LATIN NAME. The process of naming is anything but scientific, being as quirky as the scientists themselves.

SCILLY ISLES: The ATTU of Great Britain, the most famous and productive VAGRANT TRAP in the country. However, easy access and low-cost result in much better coverage than on ATTU. Invariably referred to as The Scillies, the self-mockery entirely intended.

SCREECHIE: Occasional BIRDER shorthand for screech-owl, a bit much, suggesting, deliberately, a fondness and familiarity that many users do not have.

SEABIRD: Not quite quasi-technical term for birds typically seen out of sight of land during the non-breeding season. Experienced pelagic BIRDERS make a fine distinction between seabird and TUBENOSE, the former more widely applied, but not including terns and gulls and most WATERFOWL. First-time participants on

PELAGIC TRIPS use it to include every bird they see once they have boarded the boat, including the starlings on the dock.

SEADUCK: WATERFOWL, such as EIDERS and scoters, that typically spend the WINTER, and in some cases the SUMMER, in saltwater HABITATS and are disdained by most hunters because they taste bad and fly too low and fast to make good target practice, although most are considered GAME SPECIES. Their low standing with hunters and the fact that they are rarely seen inland, where most people are, makes seaducks more appealing to BIRDWATCHERS than other waterfowl.

SEAGULL: Popular name for any gull despite the fact that most gulls breed inland, winter in coastal areas, and are rare out of sight of land. Probably originated because humans, unlike most gulls, are coastal species and that is where they noticed the birds first.

SEARCH IMAGE: 1) In birds, the unsurprising ability to recognize potential prey. 2) In BIRDERS, the ability to recognize a particular species in almost any circumstances, indicative of a driving desire to see it.

SEA SHEPHERD SOCIETY: The Baader-Meinhof Gang of ocean-based ECO-TERRORISTS. The unofficial action arm of Greenpeace. See EARTH FIRST! [*Ed.: For context, look up Red Army Faction.*]

SEA SWALLOW: Old term, still used at times, for storm-petrels, because they appear swallow-like. The use exposes the extent to which humans are biased by being terrestrial rather than pelagic species. It never occurred to anyone to refer to swallows as "land petrels."

SECONDARY FLIGHT FEATHERS: Rare triple redundancy. Secondaries are flight feathers.

SEMI-HARDY SPECIES: Those species that profit madly during favorable years, much as business did during the Reagan years, but suffer disastrous losses in the inevitable lean years. Birds, unlike humans, are driven to repeat the cycle by biological INSTINCTS over which they have no control.

SEMIWEK: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for "its either a Semipalmated or Western Sandpiper," two species difficult to differentiate in some plumages and under any but optimum conditions. The word has evolved the "K" ending because "semiwes" or "semiwest" are harder to say.

SENIOR AUTHOR: 1) (rare) Gifted, diligent researcher who designs and conducts research and writes up the results and rewards the JUNIOR AUTHORS for their participation by sharing the credit. 2) Researcher, faculty advisor, or chief factotum who makes three suggestions before the field work and two afterwards and appropriates most of the credit because he/she controls the funding or decides who gets a degree.

SEXING: Identifying a bird as either male or female, irrespective of the difficulty. See AGEING.

SEXUALLY DIMORPHIC: Term used to describe species in which males and females are sufficiently different in appearance that humans can easily tell them apart. See SEXUALLY MONOMORPHIC.

SEXUALLY MONOMORPHIC: Term used to describe species in which males and females are so similar in appearance that humans cannot tell them apart. The concept is meaningless to birds, for whom all species are highly dimorphic.

SHAG: An OLD WORLD CORMORANT. See COCK.

SHANK: Brit term, because of the relatively long legs, for the group of SHOREBIRDS that in NORTH AMERICA includes yellowlegs. There is no equivalent name here.

SHARPIE: BIRDER's shorthand for Sharp-shinned Hawk, thus saving one syllable and nearly a quarter of a second while investing the user with the aura of expertise.

SHEARWATER: 1) A SEABIRD rarely seen from land. 2) An IMMATURE gull seen from land.

SHIP-ASSISTED: Convenient explanation invoked when a bird appears on the wrong side of a large body of water.

SHOREBIRD: North American term for any member of the family that includes plovers, SANDPIPERS, and their relatives. They are called shorebirds not because they spend the majority of their time there, but because that is where humans most frequently go to see them. See WADER.

SHORE LARK: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Horned Lark. Shore Lark is older but Horned Lark is appropriately descriptive for a bird that is ABUNDANT inland at all seasons. See DIVER and other entries

SHOTGUN SCHOOL: Sneering description used by many modern BIRDWATCHERS and BIRD LOVERS to refer to the early ORNITHOLOGISTS, who went into the field with shotguns because FIELD GUIDES and high-quality optics were not available. Proof that hindsight, buttressed by moral superiority and ignorance, is inimical to understanding.

SHOULDER: Common HAWKWATCHER and occasional BIRDWATCHER shorthand for Red-shouldered Hawk.

SHOVELER: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Northern Shoveler. See SWALLOW.

SHRUB: Catchall term for a plant intermediate between a wildflower and a tree.

SIBITO: Native South American patois for a small, non-descript bird not identified to species. A word desperately needed by most American BIRDWATCHERS.

SIGHTINGS LIST: Public list, usually on a clipboard outside the VISITOR'S CENTER at NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES, of recently seen birds. Because anyone can write down any bird they think they have seen, anonymously, sightings lists are widely viewed as highly entertaining works of fiction and fantasy and regularly include REPORTS of birds that have not been, and never will be, seen within 500 miles of the site. See CHEAT SHEET, VISITOR'S CENTER, NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BIRD CHECKLIST.

SIGHT RECORD: A REPORT of a bird not supported by a photograph or specimen. When used in publications, sight records are considered probably reliable except for those made by the author, which are obviously good. More than 99 percent of all bird reports are sight records. See RECORD, REPORT.

SITE FIDELITY: The tendency of a bird to return to the same place each WINTER and SUMMER because it is safe or they were successful there. Similar to shopping at the same supermarket every week on the same day.

SITE TENACITY: The refusal of a bird to abandon a perfectly good location. Birds, driven by INSTINCT and hard-wired memory, sometimes exhibit site tenacity even after humans have rendered the landscape unrecognizable. Such stubbornness carries a high price.

SITING: The professional Cassandras who lament the state of public education will feel vindicated by the increasingly common, and inexplicable, use of this spelling when "sighting" is meant. A catchfool in the process of becoming a mumpsimus. The first appearance of "citing" is eagerly anticipated.

SITTING ON IT: Holding out. In some instances, reports of rare birds are not disseminated beyond a small circle, usually because of access problems, but sometimes because of concern over potential harassment of the bird. This leads to bitter comments like, "I've heard there is a Long-eared Owl at Anyburg, but...they are sitting on it." Those who are not in the inner circle feel about BIRDERS who sit on reports the way most parents feel about pedophiles. See SUPPRESSION.

SKUA: What in NORTH AMERICA are called JAEGERS are called skuas in the rest of the world. Another case of retaining an inappropriate name, but jaeger is German for hunter, and too good to abandon. See DIVER.

SKULKING: Descriptor for any species whose willingness to stay hidden exceeds the patience of the observer trying to see it.

SKUNK BLACKBIRD: FOLK NAME for the Bobolink, for the pattern of the upperparts of breeding plumaged males.

SKUTCH, ALEXANDER: Legendary ORNITHOLOGIST living and working in the NEW WORLD tropics. Late in life he adopted views of birds and bird behavior that embarrassed his colleagues. Only history will determine if he is a visionary or a quirky old coot who lived in solitude too long.

SKY CARP: ROCK DOVES, because, like the fish, they are introduced and unloved by BIRDWATCHERS, as opposed to the general public. [*Ed.: Name is currently Rock Pigeon.*]

SLAVONIAN GREBE: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as Horned Grebe. Although older, Horned is more descriptive and not one per cent of educated North American BIRDERS could find Slavonia on a map. See CONNECTICUT WARBLER, DIVER and other entries.

SMALL *ACCIPITER* SP.: Designation that leaves open the possibility that the Sharp-shinned seen poorly was a Cooper's Hawk, a slightly better bird in most places. See SP. and LARGE *ACCIPITER* SP.

SMALL CANADA GOOSE: Increasingly common BIRDER shorthand for any of the three small Arctic SUBSPECIES of Canada Goose, a group it is widely assumed will be treated as a separate species in the future. The three can, with effort, usually be differentiated from the larger forms, but not as easily from each other. [*Ed.: The three small subspecies were split as Cackling Goose.*]

SMRR: Southeastern Michigan Raptor Research. Hawk watch near Detroit commonly referred to by its initials. After HAZEL BAZEMORE PARK, typically records more hawks in FALL than any other site in NORTH AMERICA.

SNAKEBIRD: See DARTER.

SNOW BIRD: FOLK NAME for Dark-eyed Junco because it was thought they came south with the first snows, just one more example of how translating anecdote into fact leads us astray.

SNOWRIDER: Skier and snowsport environmental group that also supports snowmobile access to parks and other PUBLIC LANDS. See SURFRIDER.

SO-CALLED ENVIRONMENTALIST: Anyone who disagrees with you about policy. Popular derogation with anti-environmentalists. See KNEE-JERK ENVIRONMENTALIST.

SOCIETY OF ITINERANT BIOLOGISTS: Quasi-official organization of FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS not generally qualified for admittance to professional societies.

SOD'S LAW: British name for the widely believed rule that once a BOGEY BIRD has been seen it will be everywhere. Although obviously untrue it has achieved mythical status on both sides of the Atlantic. Dozens of names have been proposed in NORTH AMERICA but none has taken.

SOFT PARTS: With the exception of the eyes, the hardest parts of the bird, the BILL and feet.

SOFT-PLUMAGED PETREL: See GON-GON.

SOLICITATION DISPLAY: Given by female birds in an effort to garner the attentions of a male. It is imitative of JUVENILE begging actions, submissive, trembling, and available. One of the few areas with parallels between human and AVIAN behavior.

SOLI SAND: Fairly common BIRDER shorthand for Solitary Sandpiper.

SONOGRAM: Graphic representation of a bird's song or CALL. Supposedly reliable way to tell individuals apart and to compare song types. Despite the insistence on including sonograms in some FIELD GUIDES and popular bird books, no one without advanced degrees in music and computer science can make sense of them.

SORA: Member of the rail family. BIRDWATCHERS, trained to expect long names, have a hard time believing in one only four letters long and frequently refer to the species as Sora Rail. Also, sometimes as Carolina Rail and Carolina Sora. Sora Rail is very common in the popular press, either out of ignorance or because the writer cannot face the chore of explaining that the Sora is a member of the rail family.

SOSP: Banders code for Song Sparrow, occasionally used by BIRDERS in conversation. The "O" is pronounced as in "got."

SP.: Abbreviation for species, pronounced "SPUH." Used in the example "sparrow sp." to mean: "Well, I saw a sparrow but I have neither the knowledge or patience to figure out which kind." Also used, as in the example "*Empidonax* sp." to mean: "If these things don't call, there is no way to identify them and anyone who claims they can is a lying show-off." The third use, as in the example, "shearwater sp.," means: "These birds are identifiable but not when you are standing on the deck of

a pitching boat and the bird is in view for only three seconds and is a half-mile away." Which meaning is intended depends on the experience, circumstance, and ego of the user.

SPARK BIRD: Name, created about 50 years ago, for the individual bird or species that ignited a person's passion for watching birds. The term is still used, especially by those familiar with older BIRDWATCHING literature.

SPARRED OWL: Fairly common shorthand in the Pacific Northwest for HYBRIDS between SPOTTED OWLS and Barred Owls. More rarely called BLOTTED OWL.

SPARROW: Technical term for any small brown bird seen below waist level.

SPARROWHAWK: OLD WORLD species of ACCIPITER, not closely related to American Kestrel, the old name of which was American Sparrowhawk, still frequently heard.

SPECIALTY GUIDE: A FIELD GUIDE to one family or group, such as hawks or warblers, that provides numbingly technical and lengthy detail to observers who cannot identify easily recognized birds using a standard field guide.

SPECIATION: Before the advent of modern scientific techniques, the process by which one species became several.

SPECIES OF CONCERN: Species in trouble but not in enough trouble to risk taking steps to help it. The waiting room for the THREATENED SPECIES list.

SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN: Another way station designed to delay the listing of a species as THREATENED or ENDANGERED.

SPECK HAWK: A bird so high up and so far away, that it cannot be distinguished from a B-1 bomber. Speck hawks are valuable because as soon as it becomes clear the bird will not be coming closer, it can be confidently identified as any species not yet seen.

SPECULUM: A panel of feathers on the inner half of a bird's wing that is often brightly or contrastingly colored, especially in DUCKS. Each species has a distinctive speculum, but because it can only be seen while the bird is in flight, and flapping its wings rapidly, subtle distinctions in speculum pattern are rarely useful to most BIRDWATCHERS.

SPERM COMPETITION: Just what it sounds like: One female and several males and may the best swimmer win, thus eliminating the need for the guys to duke it out directly for the privilege of being a daddy.

SPLAT: HAWKWATCHER lingo for kill, as in, "That peregrine just splatted a pigeon."

SPLIT: To offset LUMPS, the AOU periodically separates a bird you have never heard of into three or four species.

SPORT BINOCULARS: Small, lightweight, low-powered binoculars designed for watching football games from the top row of the stadium. Used by BIRDWATCHERS who believe small and lightweight is more important than actually seeing anything.

SPOTTED OWL: The first of the great PLACEHOLDER species. See ENDANGERED SPECIES (Definition 2).

SPOTTIE: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Spotted Sandpiper.

SPRAY: Fairly common shorthand, a bit cute, for Osprey.

SPRING: For a BIRDWATCHER, the period between the sighting of the first MIGRANT WARBLER and the last; can last as little as two weeks. See FALL.

SQUAW: Fairly common shorthand for OLDSQUAW.

SQUIRRELS: The Outlaw Bikers of the bird feeding world. People who feed birds feel about squirrels the way most Americans feel about Saddam Hussein, only more so. [*Ed.: For context, look up Saddam Hussein.*]

SQUIRTING RED: HUMMINGBIRD zealot term for birds that have been frequenting feeders with RED DYE because their urine turns red, a condition hummingbird banders are only too familiar with.

STAKE DRIVER: FOLK NAME, derived from vocalization, for American Bittern; occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS.

STAKEOUT: Any rare bird that has the grace to stay put until you see it. In the blink of an eye, a stakeout can become a HYPOTHETICAL. See also IWHSIIIHKIWT and YSHBHTMA.

STANDARD DEVIATION: Not, as widely assumed, what behavior researchers acknowledge as acceptable after several months of field work in a remote area, but a statistical factor used to immunize authors when their conclusions turn out to be erroneous or unrepeatable.

STATE LIST, OFFICIAL: All the species duly recorded as having occurred within the borders of a given state. Predicated on the fanciful and anthropomorphic assumption that arbitrary political boundaries have relevance to biology or species management.

STATE LIST, PERSONAL: All the birds an observer has seen in a particular state. The most popular game among competitive LISTERS because the time and travel requirements are tolerable to a large number of people, unlike the conditions faced by those trying to amass a large North American list. But see COUNTY LIST.

STATUE OF LIBERTY: Emerging symbol of a new and increasingly bitter division in the environmental community between those who cling to the image of the United States as a land of immigrants and those who believe population growth is the greatest threat we face and prefer to build a moat around our castle rather than limit our (their) reproductive opportunities.

STEALTH RIDER: Anti-environmental legislation added at the last minute as an amendment to otherwise unrelated BILLS. Because of public opinion, this is the only way anti-environmental legislation can be passed at the national level.

STELLAR'S JAY: Very common misspelling of Steller's Jay by those who do not actually read the FIELD GUIDE. Also, Stellar's Eider.

STERNUM: Science for breastbone.

STINT: British for PEEP. From an old Dutch or Germanic word for BEAK and related to blunt or small. The etymology and euphonious nature of the word exposes the adoption of "PEEP" by Americans as embarrassingly uninspired and jingoistic.

STIPEND: Pay offered to FIELD ASSISTANTS. Typically includes housing (bring your own sleeping bag), all the spaghetti you can gag down, and expenses directly related to the task. On cushy jobs, can also include gas, vehicle use, travel, and a few hundred dollars for 3–6 months of 20-hour-a-day labor.

STOPOVER: Critical pieces of HABITAT regularly used by MIGRANTS moving between breeding and wintering grounds. A well-known example is the immense gathering of SHOREBIRDS at Delaware Bay each SPRING. Has been abused on occasion, as when a specific tree, LANDFILL, POND, DREDGE SPOIL IMPOUNDMENT, or park is designated a stopover because a WARBLER once landed there or a DUCK was forced to spend an hour during a storm.

STRAGGLER: 1) A bird that stays past its appointed time, refusing to leave by the date we think is reasonable. 2) A bird that shows up where we did not expect it.

STRATEGY: In common ornithological use, as in, "...the nesting strategy of the Northern Cardinal..." It means evolved, instinctive behavior, not, as is implied, a deliberate, well-thought out plan.

STRAY: Generic term for ACCIDENTAL, VAGRANT, and other words used for a bird out-of-range. Popular because of confusion over the precise meanings of the others and the feeling that stray is less specific.

STREAM: Flowing water wide enough that it can be crossed only with difficulty or by wading. See CREEK, RIVER.

STRINGY: British bird speak for dishonest. A stringy BIRDER is one who reports a "string" of rare birds that no one else sees, leading to the conclusion that the REPORTS are fabrications. See UNRELIABLE.

STRIP MINE: Pus-filled, bleeding, open wound on the landscape, but treasured by many BIRDWATCHERS because it concentrates grassland birds, making them easier to find and add to lists. Most strip mines are POPULATION SINKS for the species using them.

STRUTTING GROUND: Semi-technical synonym for LEK.

STYROFOAM STORM-PETREL: Pelagic BIRDER lingo for the abundant small pieces of Styrofoam and other junk floating on the water well OFFSHORE. The junk makes finding real birds resting on the water much more difficult. Of lesser concern, it is unattractive and polluting and dangerous to many forms of marine life. Variations include Clorox Albatross, Garbage Gull, Jetsam Jaeger, Flotsam Frigatebird, and numerous others suggested by specific circumstance and error.

SUBADULT: Generic ornithological term for young but we don't know how young.

SUBSPECIES: Designation given to groups of birds sufficiently different that we can tell them apart in the hand but so similar we cannot tell them apart in the field, forcing us to treat them, temporarily, as one species. See RACE.

SUMMER: For a BIRDWATCHER, the long dead birdless period between the sighting of the last SPRING MIGRANT and the first FALL migrant. A period when BINOCULARS are often misplaced. See WINTER.

SUMMERS: Deliberately non-specific category for a species that spends the SUMMER in the area but for which specific evidence of breeding is lacking, whether because it does not, or does so only sporadically, or because the evidence is difficult to obtain. Common hedge found in checklists and other publications.

SUMMER TEENAGER: BIRDER cute, thankfully not common, for Summer Tanager. See SCARLET TEENAGER.

SUNBATHING: In birds, a useful and necessary activity used to kill or ward off PARASITES. In humans, it serves no known purpose and regularly achieves the opposite effect.

SUPERCILIUM: Technical name for EYEBROW.

SUPPRESSION: The British version of SITTING ON IT, without the potential for misinterpretation. Suppression, no matter how justified, inspires a rage unequaled in the BIRDING subculture, and has led, in some cases, to physical attacks. If the bird is particularly desired, the suppresser can expect slanderous attacks on his personality, character, honesty, birding skill, and personal behavior for years and years.

SURFRIDER: Surfer environmental group, proving that you can enlist unexpected allies by appealing to their self-interest and limiting their involvement to issues that directly affect their hobby. See SNOWRIDER, ACCESS FUND.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST: The most regrettable phrase to emerge from evolutionary biology, adopted as an excuse for every low form of human behavior and every shift in animal POPULATION and distribution that is inconvenient for humans to take responsibility for or fix. See NATURAL SELECTION.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A myth.

SUSTAINABLE YIELD: The rate at which a resource can be harvested so that it is not exhausted until the current owner retires.

SUTTON'S WARBLER: Rare HYBRID between Northern Parula and Yellow-throated Warbler. Many BIRDWATCHERS and some ORNITHOLOGISTS in West Virginia and adjacent areas continue to insist that it represents a species despite conclusive evidence to the contrary because those are the areas where the bird has been found and there is a minute chance they will stumble onto one.

SWAG: Scientific Wild-Assed Guess. A statistical method employed when the necessary data or information is unavailable or unobtainable.

SWALLOW: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as BARN SWALLOW. A number of Old World species have one-word names despite the fact that they share range with other species of the same family name. This is largely because ENGLISH NAMES were established in Great Britain and British ORNITHOLOGISTS have shown no inclination to challenge popular usage and add obviously needed modifiers. See DIVER.

SWALLOWS RETURNING TO CAPISTRANO: Ornithological equivalent of Elvis sightings and Piltdown Man, designed to fill motel rooms and sell postcards and T-shirts. See TURKEY VULTURES RETURNING TO HINKLEY.

SY: Second year. Bander's code. See AHY.

SYMPATRIC: The theory that two groups of birds cannot be the same species, no matter how much they look alike, because they occur in the same area. See ALLOPATRIC.

SYMPOSIUM: An out-of-town party on someone else's dollar for researchers who would otherwise communicate by phone, fax, or e-mail. The networking and storytelling that dominates symposiums often does more to advance science than the papers presented.

SYSTEMATIC: Impressive sounding term deliberately applied to a depressing number of studies, research projects, surveys, and casual observations that are anything but. Provides the appearance of scientific rigor without the necessity of defending or defining the term.

TAIL: Common HAWKWATCHER and occasional BIRDER shorthand for Red-tailed Hawk.

TALLY: The most common name for the gathering at the conclusion of CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS. Also known as a ROUND-UP.

TALLY RALLY: Older, somewhat cute name for a TALLY or ROUND-UP.

TAPE RECORDER: Unspeakable evil. In less than a decade they went from being the favorite plaything and research tool of BIRDERS and ORNITHOLOGISTS to a piece of equipment only shown to carefully vetted friends. The change was brought about by a hysterical, self-congratulatory, feel-good campaign led by those who see birds as LITTLE FEATHERED PEOPLE and are obsessed with the emotional well-being of individuals rather than the preservation of species. See ACOUSTIC BROADCAST.

TAXONOMY: The science of naming. Frustrated BIRDWATCHERS believe the AOU changes bird names just frequently enough to leave them confused but not often enough to lead to a popular uprising. Little Green Heron becomes Green Heron becomes Green-backed Heron becomes Green Heron.

TEACHER BIRD: FOLK NAME, disappearing, for the Ovenbird, because of its song, often transliterated as "Teacher-Teacher-Teacher."

TECHNOBIRDER: Recent term describing BIRDERS who go into the field armed not just with state-of-the-art BINOCULARS and TELESCOPES, but also with TAPE RECORDERS, expensive photo gear, GPS units, cell phones, and other electronic gadgetry.

TELEPHONE WIRE LIST: List, popular among UNITED STATES BIRDERS who spend a lot of time on the road or favor DRIVE-BY BIRDING, of all species seen perched on telephone wires. Among practitioners, the length of the list is less important than the number of unexpected birds. Because most of the birds are seen from a rapidly moving vehicle, and identification under those circumstances is an inexact science, considerable skepticism exists about many totals and species.

TELESCOPE: Optical instrument that has revolutionized BIRDWATCHING by making it possible to misidentify birds at distances inconceivable to users of mere BINOCULARS.

TENGMALM'S OWL: OLD WORLD term for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as BOREAL OWL. See DIVER.

TENNESSEE WARBLER: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

TENTATIVE IDENTIFICATION: Term BIRDWATCHERS believe all other birdwatchers should use much more frequently.

TERRITORY: The area a bird actively defends. Depending on the bird, can be the area around the nest, a more extensive area, or a feeding location. Birds can have territories at any time of year. Frequently confused with HOME RANGE.

TERTIAL FRINGE SCHOOL: Slightly supercilious term for those BIRDERS who have developed a mastery of subtle and complicated PLUMAGE variations as a means of identification, especially on difficult birds. Sometimes reflects the inability or unwillingness of the user to learn the material. Also known as MITES ON A MERLIN.

THAYER'S GULL: A perilous excuse for a species that causes more angst among BIRDWATCHERS than welfare reform does among the general public.

Historically treated as a species, a SUBSPECIES of Herring Gull, a subspecies of Iceland Gull, a HYBRID swarm, and a species. There is more rumor and speculation, and fewer reliable facts, floating around about its identification and status than there is about the President's personal life. [*Ed.: Currently a subspecies of Iceland Gull.*]

THE BLUES: See BOTTOMLESS BABY BLUES.

THE CHECKLIST: Understood by BIRDERS to mean the AOU checklist, the only one that really counts. Even when spoken, THE is in caps.

THE EARTH HEALS ITSELF: Deliberate twaddle intended as a pre-emptive strike against charges of environmental abuse; stolen from pro-environmentalists who embraced it mistakenly as evidence of the power of nature, ignoring the reality that nature does not heal itself, it scabs over the wounds.

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY: A bird seen briefly or in bad light that superficially resembles a locally rare or unexpected species. After a long day afield in which no GOOD BIRDS were found, it is a certainty that there will be at least one that got away, worthy of lengthy speculation.

THERMAL: Rising column of warm air used by soaring birds to gain altitude. An elevator for hawks.

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY: Bumper-sticker philosophy of the modern environmental movement. It justifies ignoring larger, more difficult issues in favor of expending energy on protecting the community POND from paddle boats, which would reduce the chance that an odd DUCK might drop in.

THISTLE SEED: The caviar of bird feeder offerings, favored by finches but so expensive that complicated feeders have been invented to keep riffraff from scarfing it down. See NIGER SEED.

THORACIC-OUTLET SYNDROME: Medically recognized condition resulting from carrying a heavy backpack or a tripod over the shoulder for an extended period of time. Nerve stress or damage produces pain in the shoulder and neck and tingling in the arm. Also known as BACKPACKER'S SYNDROME.

THREAD: Internet jargon for a series of e-mail messages on one subject. Although the HEADER usually remains the same, threads often wander and it is not uncommon to open a message titled "First State Record of Gyrfalcon!" to find a recipe for chili or a description of a child's fourth birthday party.

THREATENED SPECIES: Species declining but not quite rare enough to be considered ENDANGERED because intervention would inconvenience interests large enough or influential enough to effect election results. The AVIAN equivalent of having your 911 call put on hold.

THREE-YEAR GULL: Group that includes most of the smaller white-headed gulls and larger HOODED GULLS. See FOUR-YEAR GULL, TWO-YEAR GULL.

THUNDERPUMPER: FOLK NAME, derived from vocalization, for American Bittern, occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS.

TIBIOTARSUS: Uncooked drumstick.

TICK: One of the big five (see CHIGGER). Although the bites of other insects are far more painful, ticks are viewed with unequaled revulsion.

TICKED: Not upset, but, in Britain, having gotten a bird, as in, "I ticked the rubythroat at Dorset." From the "tick mark" one enters besides the bird's name on

a checklist. Inveterate RARITY CHASERS are sometimes called tickers. See TWITCHER.

TIERCEL: FALCONRY term for a male Peregrine, commonly used and misused by RAPTORPHILES. See EYAS, HAGGARD.

TIMBERDOODLE: Folk and hunting name for the American Woodcock, sometimes adopted by BIRDWATCHERS, or at least the ones who do not find it too precious.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT: Planning by logging interests and government agencies to ensure that there are always some trees large enough to harvest. Any benefit to WILDLIFE is widely trumpeted but serendipitous.

TIME BUDGET: Spreadsheet showing, broken down by various activities, how a bird spends its time, especially popular during investigations of breeding. The term is evidence that even ornithology is not immune to the pervasive influence of MBA culture.

TIT: Term used in Britain for the birds we call chickadees. See COCK.

TOPOGRAPHY: Technical term for the contour and shape of a bird, especially the position of various feather tracts.

TOTAL TICKY: Currently, the ultimate game for LISTERS who can, or do, travel widely in the UNITED STATES and have no other life. The point is to see as many birds as possible in every state (excluding HAWAII) and to compare the number obtained by adding the totals with the numbers obtained by other players.

TOUR LEADER: Someone paid to shepherd groups to HOTSPOTS and remote or exotic places and show them birds. The best, and most highly compensated tour leaders have two rare, rarely-intersecting skills: the ability to find and identify almost all the birds in the area, and strong social and leadership capabilities. The second is so rarely found in those that have mastered the first that it has become a source of widespread jocularity.

TOURON: Disparaging term for a person who watches birds only on organized tours, does not look at any bird until it has been pointed out and named, cannot recognize COMMON species, and complains frequently about missing birds. Combination of TOURist and morON. Tourons are a trial for TOUR LEADERS but comprise a significant part of tour company business and are thus treated with a tolerance that irritates other participants.

TOXIC TORTS: Lawsuits filed by environmentalists, sometimes frivolously, to delay development, especially maddening to opponents because in some cases delay alone will kill a project.

TRACT MANSION: Ridiculously large suburban homes built on three acres of putting-green lawn, the land use catastrophe of the age.

TRANSIENT: Faux classy synonym for MIGRANT.

TRANSITIONAL HABITAT: A step in the natural process of one HABITAT evolving into another. If we take the long view, every habitat is transitional, although some steps take tens of thousands of years. In the short view, used to describe second-growth woodland and scrub in the process of nature's quickest transition: from grassland back to woodland.

TRANSLOCATION: Fancy version of RELOCATION.

TRAP HAPPY: BIRDER's term for birds that, having been caught once, consistently reappear in the trap, either because they are not too bright, have no short-term memory, or have concluded that the experience is not especially unpleasant and is more than compensated for by the food provided as a lure. Exceptionally trap happy birds will fly directly from the bander's hand to the trap, causing great frustration because once the trap is sprung, no new birds can enter. In extreme cases, banders have been known to hold trap happy birds for long periods or to move them to another location, both actions serious violations of the rules.

TRAPLINE: HUMMINGBIRD groupie jargon for the sequence of flowers a bird visits as it makes its daily rounds.

TRASH BIRD: Any bird it is politically correct to look down one's nose at, including most INTRODUCED SPECIES, or any bird so COMMON that anyone, regardless of reputation or talent, can find it.

TRASHER: Weak, deliberate BIRDWATCHER misspeak for thrasher, as in "California Trasher."

TREED: Not cornered, but in ecological circles, a HABITAT with trees, as in "The treed muskeg bogs."

TREE FARM: MONOCULTURE viewed with distaste by BIRDWATCHERS unless the owner has granted them unlimited access.

TREE HUGGER: Another in the list of pejorative terms for environmentalists generated by those for whom any environmental restriction is economically inconvenient.

TREE SPARROW: OLD WORLD species known in NORTH AMERICA as Eurasian Tree Sparrow to distinguish it from American Tree Sparrow, which is not in the same family. See SWALLOW.

TREND: Ephemeral statistical phenomenon much beloved by researchers and misunderstood by BIRDWATCHERS. Some trends last just long enough to build careers on.

TRINOMIAL/BINOMIAL: All birds have two or three LATIN NAMES. This allows professionals to communicate more effectively but confuses amateurs, for whom Latin is not merely dead, but inconceivable.

TRIP LIST: A DAY LIST expanded to several days or weeks. Because trip lists, unlike day lists, typically cover extensive travel and a variety of HABITATS, they often provide no information that any local checklist does not, except insight into the experience of the observer.

TRIP REPORT: Numbingly long retelling of a BIRDWATCHER's trip to a remote place you will never go, consisting primarily of: a) a long list of bird names, frequently misspelled, or b) little information about birds but with overheated endorsements of various hotels and restaurants.

TRUE LEFT/RIGHT: Terms experienced QUESTAR owners use to locate a particular bird for people using traditional scopes because the image in a Questar is usually reversed. Without the clarification, directions like, "It's the one facing right in the middle of the flock." lead to confusion because the bird is actually facing left.

TRUMPLING SWAN: HYBRID between Trumpeter and Whistling (now Tundra) Swans, a horrible, deliberate, manmade form, created in the face of all logic by biologists theoretically working on Trumpeter Swan re-introduction. Critics believe that they (Trumpling Swans and their creators) should be exiled.

TUBENOSE: 1) Quasi-technical term for some SEABIRDS because of the large, tubular, salt-excreting glands on the top of the BILL. Usually restricted to SHEARWATERS, storm-petrels, albatrosses, and their allies. 2) Affectionate nickname for any obsessive pelagic BIRDER.

TULE GOOSE: ENGLISH NAME for a SUBSPECIES of Greater White-fronted Goose, increasingly heard from BIRDERS because of the anticipation that it will be SPLIT. Disagreement over its status and identification has led to confusion, even among those who think they know what it is and how to recognize it.

TUNDRA SWAN: See WHISTLING SWAN.

TURKEY VULTURES RETURNING TO HINKLEY: Unoriginal ornithological fraud. See SWALLOWS RETURNING TO CAPISTRANO.

TURNOVER: Term ecologists use to describe the change in species composition in a HABITAT or area as a result of environmental change, usually human-induced.

TURNSTONE: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as RUDDY TURNSTONE. See SWALLOW.

TUTI: Banders code for Tufted Titmouse, sometimes used conversationally by BIRDERS. Pronounced as in "tutti-frutti."

TV: BIRDER shorthand for Turkey Vulture.

TV DINNER: ROADKILL. Because of the frequency with which Turkey Vultures are seen feeding on dead animals along roadsides.

TV LIST: The last refuge of the homebound, the agoraphobic, and those so obsessed they cannot take a break even when the sun goes down, the list of birds seen or heard on television. Within the small community of practitioners there is a nearly bloody battle over whether it is fair to count birds identified by the announcer or whether the observer is required to make the call independently. Given the frequency with which birds are misidentified by announcers, even on nature shows, the do-it-yourself contingent has the high ground. Committed players are especially fond of golf matches because they are held outdoors and everyone is quiet, making it easy to hear singing birds. The rest of the world considers it a pastime for psychopaths.

TWITCHER: British term for LISTER, for the twitching that results when a new bird is sighted.

TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as White-winged Crossbill. See DIVER. Recent evidence suggests the two crossbills may be separate species.

TWO-YEAR GULL: Group that includes most of the smaller HOODED GULLS. See THREE-YEAR GULL and FOUR-YEAR GULL. Most BIRDWATCHERS know little about MOLT or PLUMAGE sequence and find the terms annoying or frightening.

UBF: Underwater Bufflehead Factor. Not quite serious mathematical constant that permits an observer to determine the true number of diving ducks in a flock by

multiplying the highest number counted on the surface at one time by the UBF. It is, depending on who you ask, 2, 3, pi, or the square root of 2.

UNCOMMON: Any bird you cannot find but someone else can.

UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR: The lengths to which your neighbor will go to see a life bird, especially if you have already seen it. See ETHICAL BEHAVIOR.

UNRELIABLE: Unimaginative and mildly euphemistic North American version of STRINGY.

UNRELIABLE BIRDER: Anyone who has ever misidentified a bird in front of witnesses. Members of Congress and serial killers have a better chance of being rehabilitated.

UPLAND PLOVER: Older name for Upland Sandpiper, still heard fairly commonly because many BIRDWATCHERS simply cannot accept the change, in part because the bird superficially resembles a plover more than it does a sandpiper.

UPPER MANDIBLE: Commonly used as a synonym for MAXILLA, the upper half of a bird's bill. Although viewed as technically incorrect by purists, it is so widespread and so well understood that no censure accrues to those who do.

UPPIE: Very common BIRDER shorthand for Upland Sandpiper.

URBAN ENVIRONMENTALIST: A city dweller whose interest and knowledge of environmental processes and issues is sufficiently human-centered that he/she considers single trees and grass median strips on highways to be HABITAT.

URBAN FOREST: Oxymoron popular with politicians, planners, and URBAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS to describe any number of trees, down to one, found in heavily populated areas. Never used as irony, which is depressing but predictable.

USUAL SUSPECTS, THE: Locally COMMON or expected birds, sometimes TRASH BIRDS. The rapid spread of this term, borrowed from a movie title, mirrors its increasing use in every area of society and reveals BIRDWATCHING's standing as a cultural norm. "Along with the usual suspects, we saw...," means, "I won't waste your time mentioning the starlings, rock doves, etc..."

VAGRANT: A bird that, like an unemployed man, shows up in the wrong neighborhood.

VAGRANT TRAP: Site, typically an island, peninsula, or isolated piece of HABITAT, that consistently produces rare and out-of-range birds. It is distinguished, marginally, from a HOTSPOT, because rarities are found with even light coverage because geography tends to concentrate birds there.

VELVET SCOTER: OLD WORLD name for the species that in NORTH AMERICA is known as White-winged Scoter. See DIVER

VENT: On a bird, the area directly under the base of the tail. In a few species, the feathers of the vent are contrastingly colored, providing a clue to identification if seen. Named because it is where the bird "vents" the remnants of its most recent meal.

VENTRAL: Science for the underside of the bird, as in, "The vireo was yellow ventrally." See DORSAL.

VIABLE POPULATION SIZE: The number of individuals needed to ensure that a species does not become EXTINCT or ENDANGERED. Achieving viable

population size for each species is the ultimate goal of scientists and WILDLIFE managers. The number is dependent on a number of factors, including breeding behavior, PRODUCTIVITY, how many extra birds are needed to meet the desires of hunters, etc. Viable population size is a delicate balance in which only a small error in the bird's favor can turn it into a PEST SPECIES.

VIGILANCE: Paying attention to what is happening nearby. Birds are nearly always vigilant, even when they are resting, but we credit it only when the behavior is so overt that we recognize it.

VIRGIN FOREST: Never-logged woodland, increasingly rare, especially in the East. For most BIRDERS, any woodland with really big trees or one they have just discovered.

VIRGINIA RAIL: See CONNECTICUT WARBLER.

VIRGINITY: A BIRDER's reputation. Once lost, it can never be reclaimed. See STRINGY, UNRELIABLE BIRDER.

VISITOR: The junk drawer of bird occurrence categories.

VISITOR'S CENTER: Public INFORMATION CENTER at NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES and some parks that is rarely open at times, such as weekends and early morning, when most BIRDWATCHERS, who are among the most frequent visitors, need them. The frustration is mitigated because few refuges and parks have anyone on the staff that knows anything about birds and most of the brochures are out-of-date and full of errors. See NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BIRD CHECKLIST.

VOLANT: Technical term meaning capable of flight. It is so pretentious that even jargonauts tend to shy away from it.

VULTURES: Family currently treated as closely related to hawks, although most evidence suggests they are evolutionarily tied to storks. The relationship, if ever formally recognized, will discomfit HAWKWATCHERS considerably. [*Ed.: The family is currently in its own order Cathartiformes.*]

WADER: 1) British word for SHOREBIRD. We call them shorebirds because the British thought of wader first. 2) In NORTH AMERICA, a member of the heron, EGRET, ibis, bittern, stork group. As British jargon grows in popularity, confusion increases. See BINS.

WAIF: Poetic borrowing used to describe an out-of-range bird, usually but not always thought to have been displaced by WEATHER. Pleasant sounding but relieves the author of providing information about how unexpected the occurrence is. See ACCIDENTAL, CASUAL, BIRDS HAVE WINGS AND SOMETIMES USE THEM.

WANT LIST: BIRDWATCHER's letter to Santa Claus, a list of birds the observer "NEEDS" for various lists, sent without embarrassment to anyone who might help them see a bird, thus eliminating the necessity of actually spending any time looking.

WARBLER: Technical term for any small yellowish bird seen above the level of a two-story building.

WARBLER NECK: Condition, almost always temporary, consisting of soreness or pain in the neck from spending long periods watching warblers in the SPRING, when they are typically in the upper reaches of tall trees and the observer must

stand with head thrown back. Although as or more common among HAWKWATCHERS, the WARBLER folk got there first.

WATCH LIST: List of birds thought to be in decline. Because nothing will be done other than to acknowledge that they are declining, some BIRDWATCHERS refer to it as the "Watch them now because you won't be able to watch them later" list and use it to identify birds they NEED to add to various lists before it becomes too difficult.

WATERBIRD/LANDBIRD: Convenient division that allows FIELD GUIDE authors to separate birds into two nearly equal categories. Beginning BIRDWATCHERS often forget that hawks and members of the CHICKEN FAMILY are in the waterbird half of the guide. The only waterbird in the landbird half of the guide is the American Dipper.

WATER DANCE: Pleasing term used by biologists to describe the striking COURTSHIP activities of some grebes.

WATERFOWL: WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT term for DUCKS and geese, preferred over the less socially acceptable "moving target."

WATERFOWL BREEDER: Someone who keeps and propagates DUCKS, geese, and swans for fun and profit. Especially popular are the gaudy and the rare because zoos, parks, and individuals will pay large sums for them, and COMMON species used for PUT-AND-TAKE HUNTING. The activity is the bane of BIRDWATCHERS, especially LISTERS, because many breeders are casual about keeping birds from escaping. ESCAPES are the origin of many out-of-range waterfowl.

WATERMELON ENVIRONMENTALIST: Green on the outside, red on the inside, a label applied by conservatives to discredit ideas by suggesting the messenger is a leftist.

WATERPROOF: Highly valued characteristic of optics that will not leak or fog up except under extraordinary circumstances. See WATER RESISTANT.

WATER RESISTANT: Claim made of optics that are not quite WATERPROOF and will leak or fog up in some circumstances, such as heavy rain. See WEATHERPROOF.

WAVY: FOLK NAME, picked up by hunters and occasionally used by BIRDWATCHERS, for Snow Geese, especially when seen in flying flocks. Folklore says it is because of the wavy flight and that explanation is often given by hunters and birdwatchers. It is in error. The name comes from a Native American word apparently imitative of the CALL.

WAXWING: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Bohemian Waxwing. See SWALLOW.

WEATHER: What is happening outdoors on a particular day, week, or month. See CLIMATE.

WEATHER PROOF: Muted claim of optics that should not be used in rain, mist, or even high humidity. See WEATHER RESISTANT.

WEATHER RESISTANT: Optics that will generally fog up or leak at an inopportune moment, such as trying to watch a bird on any but a clear, dry day.

WEED: Wildflower growing uninvited in a yard.

WEEDY SEEDY: Any area, especially in WINTER, that has few trees and is unmowed. In common BIRDER parlance, means "good for sparrows."

WESTERN GULL: One of six species of gulls indigenous to the western United States, it got the name because it was first in line.

WETLAND: Historically legitimate HABITAT description stretched for political reasons to cover any area any individual or organization wants to protect, including rain puddles and septic tank seeps. The debasement of the concept has made preservation of real wetlands immeasurably harder.

WHALE: Spectacular marine mammal whose primary usefulness is in providing distractions during slow periods on PELAGIC TRIPS.

WHISTLING SWAN: Previous name for TUNDRA SWAN before it was lumped with the OLD WORLD BEWICK'S SWAN. Still commonly used by BIRDWATCHERS, which is appropriate as long as the North American form is being discussed.

WHITE-BILLED DIVER: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Yellow-billed Loon. The difference in color description reflects perceived seasonal variation. See DIVER.

WHITE PELICAN: OLD WORLD species distinct from American White Pelican. The lack of a modifier on the Old World species occasionally causes confusion. [*Ed.: Also known as Great White Pelican.*]

WHITE STARLING: Derogatory term for Cattle Egret, favored by those who believe the species' spread in the Western Hemisphere is the result of human interference.

WHITE-WINGED GULL: BIRDER shorthand for two species, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls, but excluding other "white-winged" species such as Ivory, Ross's, and THAYER'S. The two are lumped because many BIRDWATCHERS still believe they are difficult to tell apart, an error perpetuated by many FIELD GUIDES. [*Ed.: Thayer's is currently a subspecies of Iceland Gull.*]

WHOOPHILL: Unfortunate consequence of good intentions. The name for HYBRIDS between Whooping and Sandhill Cranes, the result of CROSS FOSTERING, a technique employed with enthusiasm but perhaps with inadequate consideration of the complications. The young Whooping Cranes raised by Sandhill parents failed to develop necessary Whooping Crane behaviors and the program, initiated with much hoopla, was eventually abandoned.

WIDGEON: Variant spelling of WIGEON, officially sanctioned in some parts of the world at various times. Many BIRDWATCHERS remain confused over which is correct. In general, it is safe to use the spelling without the "D" almost anywhere, but only purists will argue that either is incorrect.

WIFE: Common use by non-BIRDWATCHERS to refer to the presumed female of a mated pair of birds. Drives birdwatchers nearly incoherent with frustration.

WIGEON: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Eurasian Wigeon. See WIDGEON, SWALLOW.

WILD CANARY: What many non-BIRDWATCHERS and some FEEDER WATCHERS call any small yellow bird, especially American Goldfinches.

WILDERNESS: Areas currently too remote and inaccessible to justify development.

WILDFOWL: Britspeak for WATERFOWL.

WILDLIFE: All non-human animals, excluding those we have a moral objection to, such as PEST and INTRODUCED SPECIES. Many people wish to live in close proximity to wildlife as long as a strict visa system is in place to keep inconvenient species at bay.

WILDLIFE CONCERNS: Euphemism for issues revolving around animals that people kill for fun. Any concern the WILDLIFE might have is irrelevant.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: Large industry, mostly underwritten by government, in which billions of taxpayer dollars are spent propagating GAME SPECIES for the benefit of 10 percent of the population. Only a minuscule portion of the money available to WILDLIFE managers is spent on NONGAME SPECIES.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA: Land set aside and managed for the benefit of GAME SPECIES, often to the detriment of NONGAME species; taxpayer pork project for hunters.

WILDLIFE RESOURCE: Any animal that can be exploited for human benefit, primarily by hunters and fishermen, but also by commercial interests. Warblers, for example, are not considered a resource, even if they draw large numbers of cash-dispensing tourists to a location.

WILLY'S PHAL: BIRDER shorthand, a bit strained but fairly common, for Wilson's Phalarope.

WILSON, ALEXANDER: Proof that no one remembers who finished second, no matter how extraordinary the accomplishments.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL: Probably the most ABUNDANT bird in the world, a fact few BIRDERS are aware of because it is a SEABIRD rarely seen from land. See PASSENGER PIGEON.

WIND: The bane of BIRDWATCHING. Every incremental increase in wind speed reduces the number of birds seen and birdwatching in high winds is particularly fruitless. But, see GALE and BREEZE.

WINDOW LIST: Palliative for dedicated LISTERS trapped for long periods in an office.

WIND POWER: Environmentally friendly alternative to nuclear, hydro-electric, and coal generated power, enthusiastically embraced by BIRDWATCHERS until it was discovered that the windmills were death traps for hawks.

WING CHORD: Measurement, taken from handheld birds and specimens, of the distance from the bend of the wing to the tip. Useful for comparisons and as a general indicator of body size, assuming that the ratio of inner to outer wing is the same on all birds.

WINGLOAD: Term beloved by raptor biologists to describe the relationship between the size of the bird and the area of the spread wing. A mathematical plaything from which the results can be used to support a number of conflicting theories about hawk flight and MIGRATION.

WING SPAN: Measurement, at best an approximation, of the distance from wingtip to wingtip with the wings extended. Published measurements are usually calculated from only a few birds and the methods used are inconsistent. See WING SPREAD.

WING SPREAD: Slightly less technical term for WING SPAN, but no more reliable.

WINNOWING: Name for the COURTSHIP flight of snipe, from the sound the wings make.

WINTER: For a BIRDWATCHER, the period between the sighting of the last FALL MIGRANT and the first SPRING migrant, usually a WARBLER. Not a dead season like SUMMER because of CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS and DUCK watching and because it is the time when feeders are most active.

WINTER CHIPPY: Not, as you might expect, a bird of easy virtue during the colder months, but BIRDER cute for the American Tree Sparrow because of its similarity to the Chipping Sparrow.

WINTER FINCH: A group of far northern, conifer-dwelling birds that periodically but unpredictably move southward. Predictions of winter finch IRRUPTIONS are an annual November ritual for BIRDWATCHERS. In those rare years when irruptions actually occur, movement always stops just north of you.

WINTER RANGE: Speculative conclusion about where a bird can be found in the nonbreeding season. See BREEDING RANGE.

WNK (WE'LL NEVER KNOW): Slang for a possibly GOOD BIRD that got away before it could be positively identified. Permits hours of wistful debate. See YNK.

WOBBLING VIREO: BIRDER cute for Warbling Vireo, most often used by those who believe mispronunciations are amusing, whether sensical or not.

WOODCOCK: See SAPSUCKER.

WOODENPECKER: Minor, overdone, off-color pun dared by male BIRDERS after carefully checking to see who might overhear them.

WOODIE: BIRDER shorthand for Wood Duck. The expression, "I've got a woodie!" should not be misinterpreted. It means, "I'm watching a Wood Duck."

WOODPECKER: See SAPSUCKER.

WOODY WOODPECKER: Cartoon character actually created in the image of a real bird, the PILEATED WOODPECKER. If you stare at it long enough it almost looks like one.

WORD BOTCHING: Spoonerism of "BIRDWATCHING" first used by English ORNITHOLOGIST James Fisher and subsequently stolen or independently discovered by a regrettably large number of writers.

WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING: If JOHN JAMES AUDUBON had met P.T. Barnum...

WORLD'S LARGEST BIRD: A question without an answer. By height and weight, it is the Ostrich. By wingspan, it is the Wandering Albatross. By wing area...

WORTH HAVING: British BIRDWATCHING slang for a reasonably GOOD BIRD. See COSMIC MIND-BLOWER.

WOTH: Banders code for Wood Thrush, occasionally used by BIRDERS in conversation. The "O" is pronounced as in "got."

WREN: OLD WORLD name for the species known in NORTH AMERICA as Winter Wren. See SWALLOW. [*Ed.: The two species are now split, Wren becoming Eurasian Wren.*]

YANK: Britspeak for a North American bird, especially as a VAGRANT.

YARD BIRD: The ultimate accomplishment. All BIRDWATCHERS, no matter what their level of expertise, consider yard birds the highest goal. A "good" bird seen in the yard is better than a "great" bird seen somewhere else.

YARD LIST: For LISTERS, one of the most important categories. Not, as indicated, a list of all the birds that have occurred in the yard, which is too limiting, but a list of all the birds the observer has seen while standing in the yard, no matter how far away they are.

YEARLING: Quasi-literary borrowing occasionally applied to IMMATURE birds. Ornithologically meaningless.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Taxonomic conundrum historically connected to a number of families. Currently treated as a WARBLER because it is green and yellow and does not act like a tanager, shrike, or vireo. Does not act like a warbler, either. [*Ed.: Currently in its own family Icteriidae.*]

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO: The ultimate ornithological redundancy, occasionally treated as a separate species.

YELLOWHAMMER: FOLK NAME for Yellow-shafted Flicker, still heard once in a while from BIRDWATCHERS.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER: Species periodically treated as two, Myrtle and Audubon's, named for its distinctive yellow RUMP, a field mark it shares with at least five other warblers.

YELLOWSTART: BIRDER slang for female and IMMATURE American Redstarts because the red areas on the tail and breast are replaced with yellow.

YELLOW WARBLER: A species, not a description, although many warblers appear mostly yellow. But see CAPITALIZATION OF BIRD NAMES.

YNK (YOU'LL NEVER KNOW): Addressed to a BIRDER who insists on talking endlessly about a possibly GOOD BIRD that was not positively identified. The term is usually delivered with obvious frustration and is designed to cut off further discussion.

YSHBHTMA (YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE TEN MINUTES AGO): Expression, delivered with conflicting amounts of despair and glee that is, secretly, the most delicious pronouncement one BIRDER can make to another.

ZIP: HAWKWATCHER jargon for American Kestrel or other any other COMMON hawk that passes the watch quickly, as in, "There are a lot of zips going by today."

ZOOM BINOCULARS: The Salad Shooter of BIRDWATCHING optics, bought, with hope and enthusiasm by novices. The optical quality of zoom binoculars is so low that opera glasses are preferable.

ZOOM SCOPE: The favorite choice in high-powered optics among BIRDWATCHERS. Zoom scopes allow the user to increase the power with the turn of a knob, thus avoiding the frustration of changing lenses. Except in the case of a few very high-priced scopes, the user can slowly increase the power and watch the quality of the image deteriorate in proportion to the magnification.

MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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Contributors should prepare manuscripts according to the following instructions.

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